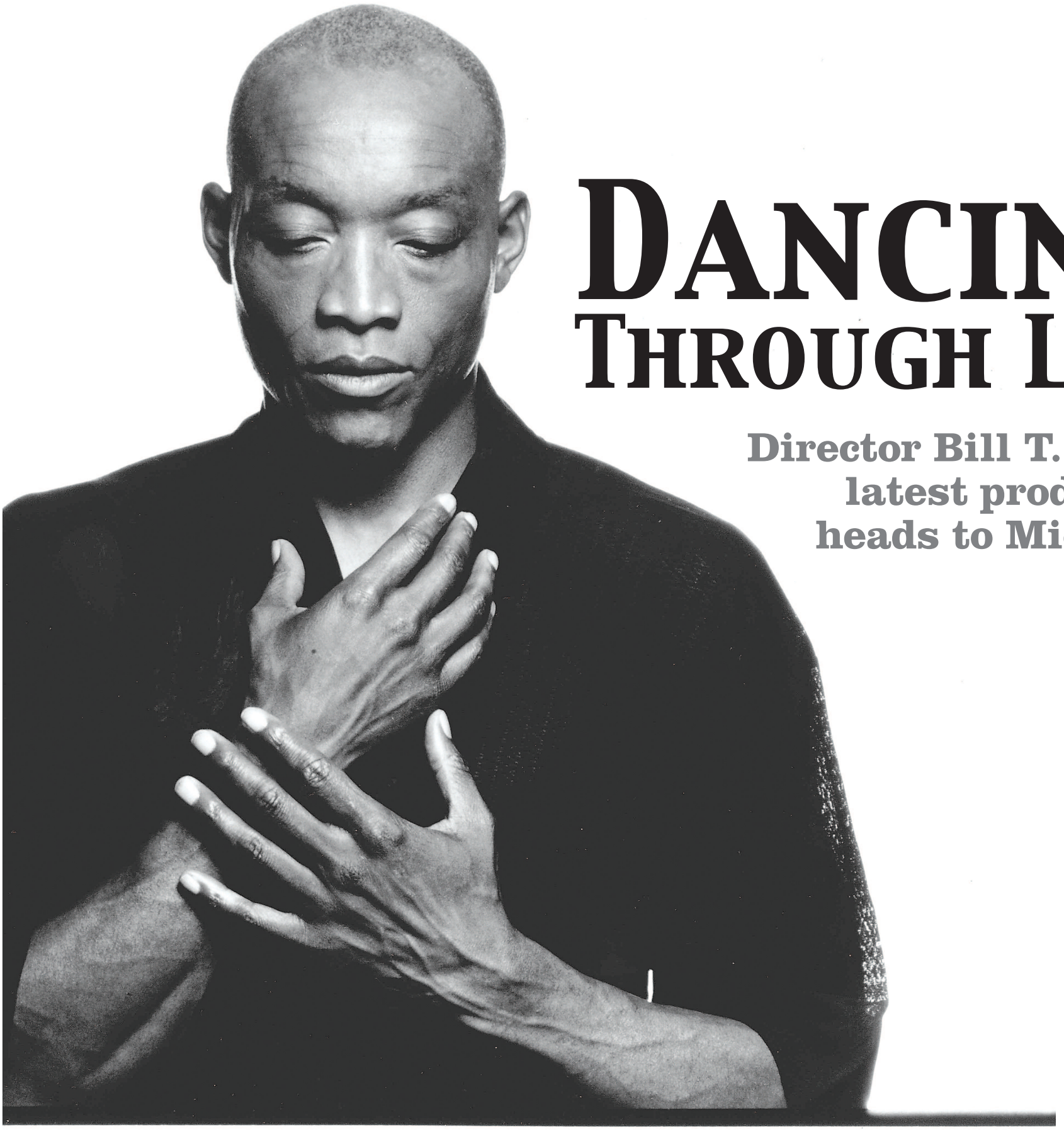
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Between the Lines



Dancing Through Life

Director Bill T. Jones' latest production heads to Michigan

OUT, IN OFFICE
Pugh swears in to new Detroit post

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January 14, 2010

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Between THE Lines™

MICHIGAN'S WEEKLY NEWS FOR LESBIANS, GAYS, BISEXUALS, TRANSGENDERS AND FRIENDS

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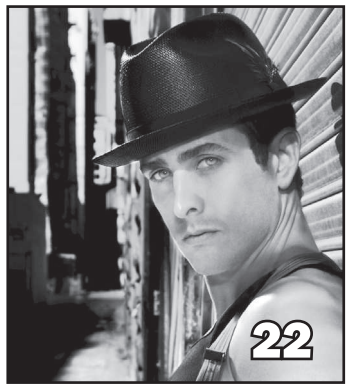
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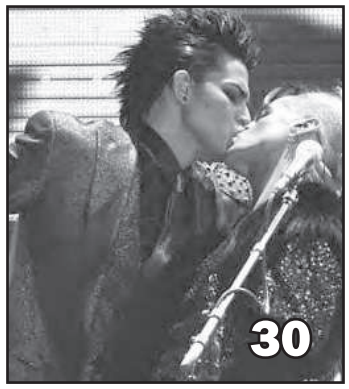
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Cover story

Photo: Joanne Savio

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A SONG FOR CORETTA

Detroit Repertory Theatre

by Pearl Cleage
Directed by Barbara Busby

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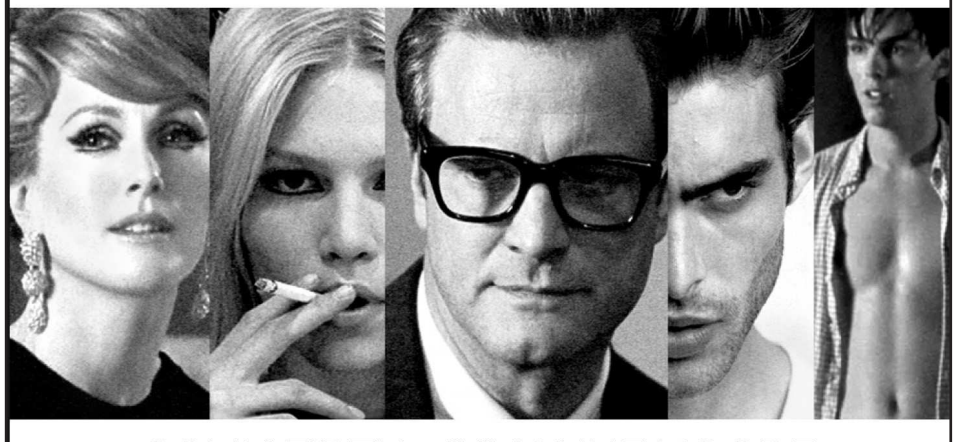
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Between Ourselves

by Jessica Carreras

Knoll Larkin is a trans and community activist. The Detroit resident works in the University of Michigan's Bioethics Program as a research technician associate – but hasn't given up on his passion for the LGBT community.

1 You used to work for Affirmations, but now are at the University of Michigan. How do you stay in touch with the LGBT community now?

I stay connected to folks in the Mmtro Detroit area mostly by attending events and stopping by Affirmations for a visit when I can. Of course, Facebook always helps!



I've also begun working on an independent project with assistance from UM's school of public health and bioethics faculty to improve LGBT community center's understanding of community-academic research partnerships and ethical considerations when LGBTQ communities are the subject of research. I'm hoping to stay connected to LGBT community centers locally and nationally through this work.

2 What was it like transitioning from a smaller LGBT non-profit to a large university with diverse employees – many of whom are not gay or may not be as educated on LGBT issues?

Wait, there are people who aren't queer at U of M? Just kidding. It is a very different environment. In my previous work my identity, as a trans man, was much more closely tied to my work. For me this was both incredibly powerful and incredibly draining at the same time. While I miss my Affirmations family, I've found new ways to connect with LGBT and non-LGBT folks around my professional interests. Actually, during the mandatory orientation all new UM Health System employees go through we discussed gender identity, gender expression and transgender identity. Much to my surprise, I wasn't even the one who brought it up.

3 How are you involved with LGBT issues now?

I'm really looking forward to all the volunteer possibilities! After I switched jobs, I took some time to center myself, to make sure I was attending to my personal health and happiness. I think a lot of us who give a lot or are involved with social justice work don't do this enough. When I do get more involved again I would like to direct my focus back to health care accesses and LGBT health disparity issues. And, like I mentioned above, I'm also very interested in examining ways in which we can share responsibility as community members and community leaders to monitor, contribute to and actively participate in research involving LGBT communities.

4 What do you think is the importance of being out in the workplace?

Being out at work is a very personal decision that, for trans folks, can bring some additional considerations. I'm proud of my identity and my work in the LGBT community so my resume pretty much outs me as queer/trans or at least an ally. To be out is, in part, an exercise in integrity, of being true to one's self and values. To hide that aspect is in fact an effort and distracts from the other things we are doing. I think most of us are healthier, happier and thus better at our work when our outer and inner lives are aligned, not in conflict.

5 You maintain a blog and enjoy writing. How does your identity factor in to what you write about?

I've been writing a lot more these days. I think blogging/writing is one way for me to think about and have dialogue with others about the ways my identity impacts how I experience the world.

Check out Knoll's blog at http://f-t-somethingelse.blogspot.com.

Between Ourselves is a weekly feature that highlights members of Michigan's LGBT and allied community. To recommend someone for Between Ourselves, e-mail Jessica at jessica@pridesource.com







Affirmations to host COLAGE kick-off

FERNDALE – A kick-off party and potluck meal for the new metro Detroit chapter of Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere is set to take place from 1-3 p.m. Jan. 16 at Affirmations LGBT community center in Ferndale.

This celebration of families will introduce the community to the COLAGE chapter

and the programs and services it will be providing in 2010.

COLAGE is a national movement of children, youth and adults with one or

more lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or queer parents. The organization has chapters in states across the U.S., as well as in Canada, Sweden and England. COLAGE works to build community and work toward social justice and LGBT equality through youth empowerment, leadership development, education and advocacy.

The local chapter of COLAGE was begun by Affirmations' own new Social Activities Coordinator, Rosalea Brown. "As the daughter of a lesbian who grew up in metro Detroit, I always wanted a place where I could build community," said Brown, who was hired at the center last year. "Living in a world that treats our families differently can be isolating and challenging. By connecting with peers who share our experiences, we are able to become strong advocates for ourselves and our families."

"I've seen firsthand what an amazing resource COLAGE is for families," Brown continued. "Before working at Affirmations, I interned at the COLAGE national office in San Francisco for three months. I am so excited to take what I've learned and bring it to families in my hometown of metro Detroit."

Youth and adults of all ages are encouraged to attend the inaugural event, and families are encouraged to bring a dish to pass. Plates, utensils and beverages will be provided.

Resources for LGBTQ families, including the COLAGE newsletter, "Just For Us,"

will be available at the event for families to take home.

For more information about the metro Detroit COLAGE chapter, please call

Rosalea Brown at 248-298-7105, or e-mail her at rbrown@goaffirmations.org.

To learn more about this and other programs available for LGBT Michiganders, visit www.goaffirmations.org.

Hope, inspiration and victory

An HIV-positive woman shares her story of triumph over problems – and a disease – that she would not allow to claim her life

BY JESSICA CARRERAS

FERNDALE – Rosie Hayes is happily married with three children. She is a motivational speaker, and has traveled around the nation, speaking to groups large and small. She's also HIV positive. At a Jan. 5 Michigan AIDS Coalition breakfast, she shared her story – and was honored with an unexpected reward.

The youngest of six, Hayes grew up with, as she puts it, "a lot of issues." She began experimenting with drugs and alcohol at a young age – experiments that eventually consumed her entire life.

"By the time I was 17 years old and out of high school, I had just about experimented with every drug that I could experiment with other than heroin," Hayes recalls. "I had many different experiments with many different mind and mood-altering chemicals … (and) as a result of that, at 19 years old I had another experiment with another mind and mood-altering chemical – crack cocaine. It was then that my whole life really began to manifest a destructive path."

Crack cocaine became Hayes' drug of choice, sending her in a vicious downward spiral that forced her to turn to prostitution to maintain her habit. "Destruction began to accelerate, degradation began to accelerate," she says of the time in her life. "I lost all sense of decency. I did all types of things I thought I would never do."

For 14 years, Hayes remained in that cycle, but says, "I did get out, by the grace of God. Not a lot that I did, but it was his grace that helped maneuver me and get me out."

She began Narcotics Anonymous, followed the 12-step program and began to turn her life around. Simple life maintenance that she had neglected for so long – getting her teeth cleaned, going to the doctor – became a priority as Hayes emerged from her drug-induced haze. And it was at that visit to the doctor, where she had routine blood work done for the first time in years, that she was delivered another debilitating blow: she was HIV positive.

"I was two years clean then," Hayes shares, "and I just could not imagine, after all I've been though, … after I've jumped over this hurdle and that hurdle – crack cocaine addiction, prostitution, almost being killed – I was able to overcome and get out, and now you hand me this piece of paper and tell me that death has caught you right here."

But Hayes refused to let her diagnosis stop her from living the life she had finally deemed herself worthy to have: Sober. Sane. And happy.



Rosie Hayes, center, with Michigan AIDS Coalition Executive Director Helen Hicks and LifeLinks creator Link Wachler at a Jan. 5 MAC breakfast. Wachler presented Hayes with a bracelet donned with charms symbolizing HIV as she knows it: Hope, Inspiration and Victory. BTL photo by Jessica Carreras.

> **"As I began to reflect on all I had already been through and overcome, I just knew that I was not going to die like this."**
>
> **–Rosie Hayes on her HIV diagnosis**

"As I began to reflect on all I had already been through and overcome, I just knew that I was not going to die like this," she says. "I had been face to face with death many other times before. I knew that if death didn't get me there, surely I wasn't going to let death take me here."

Instead, she prayed, educated herself and made her life – and her newly discovered illness – manageable.

And after all of that, she began to speak out about life after addiction, and life with HIV. "One thing I knew I could not do was be silent, because I know that silence is a killer," she says. "I'm living life now like it's gold."

"This is my life after HIV," she continues. "I have joy and I have liberty. I wish it could have went another way for me to get it, but never the less, this is the way it happened, and I've learned to overcome and to live life every day to the fullest."

When asked how she thinks of HIV now, Hayes responds, "Hope, Inspiration and Victory. And I'm positively full of it."

Hayes' manifestation of those attributes was awarded at that Jan. 5 MAC breakfast with a bracelet, made especially for her by jeweler Link Wachler.

Wachler, through his company, LifeLinks, creates jewelry with his brother, Glenn, that is designed to remind wearers of the important things in their lives – like family, friends and health. The charms on each piece of handcrafted jewelry symbolize those important reminders.

For Hayes' bracelet, the three charms stood for her motivators: hope, inspiration and victory. But more than just receiving a present, her words will touch others in need. MAC will begin selling similar bracelets in her honor to raise funds for their work helping HIV-positive people in the metro Detroit and LGBT communities. And hopefully, they can spread a little hope, inspiration and victory.

Petition aims to stop Macomb County HIV terrorism charge

Being HIV positive could mean being seen as a biological terrorist in Macomb County. But now, supporters of the man being charged could have the opportunity to fight back.

Clinton Township resident Daniel Allen, who is gay and HIV positive, is facing charges of possession of a harmful biological substance after biting his neighbor, Winfred Fernandis Jr., on his lip during a fight between the two men stemming from alleged taunts about Allen's sexual orientation. After Allen's HIV status was brought to the attention of the court, Macomb County Prosecutor Eric Smith charged Allen with what ammounts to an act of biological terrorism, alledging that his bite could potentially infect his neighbor with the disease, and that the infection could have been intentional.

As change.org – who is spearheading a grassroots effort to help Allen – put it, the charge is "woefully ignorant of science."

A petition has begun on Allen's behalf by the Web site to urge Smith to drop the charges of terrorism. Visit http://gayrights.change.org/ and follow the "Action Alert" link at the top of the Web page to sign the petition.

The Triangle Foundation is also assisting Allen to ensure that he is treated fairly. "We continue to advise Allen, who is facing some daunting challenges," Triangle said in a recent e-mail statement. "It can be quite challenging to walk into a courtroom in Macomb County, Michigan with your sexuality and your HIV/AIDS status out in the open. Triangle Foundation is present so that Allen is respected and not vilified due to his status or sexual orientation."

Allen is also asking that supporters offer whatever financial support they can for his legal bills through the Daniel Allen Defense Fund. Donations should be mailed to the fund, care of James L. Galen Jr. at 17097 17 Mile Road, Suite 201, in Clinton Township.

To learn more about Allen's case, visit www.tri.org, www.change.org, or watch for updates in Between The Lines.

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Charles Pugh, Detroit's first openly gay city council member and president, addressed a large crown at the swearing-in ceremony at the Fox Theater on Jan. 8.

Detroit Mayor Bing, new city council take oath of office

Breaking with past is theme of the day as new leaders are sworn in

BY DAVID ALIRE GARCIA

DETROIT – In front of a packed Fox Theater crowd in downtown Detroit on Jan. 8, Mayor Dave Bing formally took the oath of office for a full four-year term and in his inaugural address declared "a new day" in the economically battered city.

"This is more than the inauguration of a mayor or a city council or city clerk. It is a new day," Bing, the city's 62nd mayor, said. "We will no longer be defined by the failures, divisiveness and self-serving actions of the past. We are turning the page to a new time in Detroit, focused not just on the challenges we face, but the opportunities we have to rebuild and renew our city."

The mayor's pledge was greeted by a standing ovation and thunderous applause.

Bing went on to outline familiar campaign themes of stronger ethics at City Hall, reducing crime and "the need to right-size city government with a data-driven and longterm, big picture approach."

In a nod to the city's still unresolved $300 million budget shortfall, the mayor acknowledged that "many more difficult decisions lie ahead."

In his remarks, new City Council President Charles Pugh echoed Bing's theme of a new day for "a smaller yet stronger Detroit," even acknowledging the series of scandals in the recent past that have rocked Michigan's largest city.

"On behalf of all my colleagues, let me boldly say all the madness of the past ends today," the first-term councilman said. Pugh, the city's first openly gay councilor and council president, pledged to lead a council of "competent decision makers, with integrity and rock-solid ethics and true transparency."

Asking his eight fellow councilors to join him around the podium, Pugh also sought to emphasize a sense of unity on the city's often sharply divided council: "Here we stand united, we will not be five plus four, we will be nine standing as one," he said to sustained applause. "In this new decade we are serious about setting a new tone and working toward creating a new Detroit."

Gov. Jennifer Granholm also attended the ceremony and spoke before the crowd, which included several of the announced and unannounced candidates already running to succeed her next year. She thanked Bing for his decision to run for mayor during "a time of utter change, a time of terrible beauty."

She added, "I'd like to express the thanks and the support of 10 million citizens in Michigan. The fates of Detroit and Michigan are, as Dr. King would have said, inextricably bound in a mutual garment of destiny," she said. "We know that Detroit's future is Michigan's future."

The two-term term-limited governor also sought to tamp down immediate turn-around expectations by cautioning Detroiters to have what she described as "realistic expectations about how quickly things can happen."

Earlier in the ceremony, Bing's pastor – the Rev. Charles G. Adams, senior pastor of Detroit's Hartford Memorial Baptist Church – delivered a very different, the-sky-is-the-limit message:

"We will not falter. We will not fail. We will not fold for we know that as Detroit goes, so goes Michigan, and as Michigan goes, so goes the world," he said to applause. "Detroit is still here and Detroit is now ready for any challenge. If it's a job, we can do it. If it's a mountain, we can move it. If it's a budget, we can balance it. If it's a deficit, we can erase it. If it's a child, we can teach it."

Thanking Adams, Bing would later quip: "I thought I was in church for a moment there."

But beyond the oratory and platitudes, not everyone was pleased with the newly inaugurated mayor. Among a cluster of protesters standing on the sidewalk outside the theater and just across Woodward Avenue was Detroit resident Ann Taylor, who said she initially voted for Bing in the August primary but later soured on the businessman-turned-politician because he refused to debate his opponent. Now she claims that that the official canvas that certified Bing as the winner was "a rubber stamp operation."

"I'm out here as a concerned citizen because I witnessed the canvassing of the Detroit election commission," she said. "They actually certified empty boxes… What I saw and experienced disturbed me because I feel as though a whole group of citizens in the city of Detroit were disenfranchised." She claims that as many as 50,000 absentee ballots were not properly counted.

Bing's opponent in the November election, Tom Barrow, has since requested that the attorney general investigate claims of fraud.

Originally posted on MichiganMessenger.com

GLBTQ Online High School students get mental health services

EDEN PRAIRIE, MINN. – PRIDE Institute and GLBTQ Online High School have partnered to provide mental health services on an as-needed basis to the school's students.

GLBTQ Online High School is the world's first online high school created especially for LGBTQ students. It is a private school based near St. Paul, Minn., and opens Jan. 25 to serve students nationwide and from around the world.

The school aims to provide a safe and welcoming educational community and a high quality, comprehensive college-preparatory online high school experience for students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning their sexual orientation or gender using the best technology and techniques of distance education.

Founded in 1986, with more than 10,000 graduates, PRIDE Institute is a provider of in-patient and out-patient programs devoted exclusively to treating the mental health and chemical dependency needs of the LGBTQ community.

PRIDE's growing focus on health needs of adolescents is helping GLBTQ Online High School move forward dramatically with its efforts to provide not only high quality education for its students, but comprehensive support services as well.

"GLBTQ Online High School is an important new option for these students, and we at PRIDE and PRISM are excited to be a part of it," said Weston Edwards, PhD, LP, clinic director of PRIDE Institute's Outpatient Services.

PRISM, the Minneapolis-based PRIDE-affiliate mental health program, will be providing online and phone services, as well as using its nationwide network of GLBTQ-friendly mental health services to assist families in finding services in their own area.

Dave Glick, executive director for the GLBTQ Online High School, added, "We want the very best comprehensive services for our students. Our partnership with PRIDE and PRISM ensures that if needed, our children will receive the highest quality counseling services available, no matter where they live."

This partnership will be fully in place in time for the school's opening on Jan. 25.

For more information, visit the PRIDE Institute online at www.pride-institute.com.

Ohio hopes to stop smoking by gay youth, others

CLEVELAND (AP) – Ohio is beginning a pilot project in northeast Ohio aimed at preventing tobacco use by the state's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth.

Ohio health officials say the Centers for Disease Control estimates the rate of tobacco use among that youth demographic is 60 percent higher than in the general youth population.

The state health department says the ButtOut Ohio project will focus on the Cleveland area. It will educate LGBT youth about tobacco's health risks and provide resources to help users quit.

Officials say young people often pay little attention to traditional media campaigns. They say those aimed at the LGBT populations are a challenge because many fear discrimination if their sexual orientation is known.

Creep of the Week
Lisa Miller

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

When Lisa Miller left her partner Janet Jenkins and took their daughter Isabella with her, it was the Christian thing to do. Quite literally, since Miller denounced her former lesbianism and became a Christian – in Jerry Falwell's church, no less.


Miller

Miller doesn't want anything to do with Jenkins and doesn't want their daughter to have anything to do with Jenkins, either. And so Jenkins sued. And things got ugly and have been ugly for years as things so often are in custody battles.

Except that this is no ordinary custody battle. Lisa Miller is, in many ways, a dream come true for the anti-gay right. She's a fairly attractive ex-lesbian fighting in order to save her daughter from the evil forces of homosexuality. Needless to say, she has received a lot of high-publicity help from the anti-gay legal ranks, such as the Liberty Council.

The case is complicated on so many levels. Miller and Jenkins did, after all, enter into a civil union in Vermont before they had Isabella. But when Miller left with Isabella, she went to Virginia, a state that does not recognize same-sex unions.

There has been a court ordered custody agreement, but Miller has always defied it. She doesn't want Isabella around Jenkins because Jenkins is gay and that is, after all, horrible and disgusting and evil and wrong and how can she teach these values to her daughter if Jenkins is in the picture?

Tired of fucking around, a Vermont judge ruled in favor of Jenkins and ordered custody be relinquished by Miller on New Year's Day.

So on New Year's Day, Miller showed up on Jenkins's doorstep with Isabella and the two women hugged and said, "No hard feelings" and Isabella stood between them and smiled.

Actually, Miller and Isabella never showed up. And nobody seems to know where they are. Her lawyers at the Liberty Council are mum. In fact, there was even a report that they were on vacation and couldn't comment. Because, you know, a client skipping out on a court order and potentially fleeing with the child is no big thing.

The saga has brought out the best and the brightest of the anti-gay brigade. National Organization for Marriage President Maggie Gallagher had particularly clarion insight on the matter. "Let this act as a warning call: Don't enter civil unions with people if you do not want to give them legal rights over your children," Gallagher said.

Oh, OK. Got it. It's much better to have children outside of pesky legal commitments like civil unions. But why stop there? Marriage, an institution open to everyone except gays, is an even bigger problem. Because having kids with someone you're married to also creates a lot of legal headaches. And if you never get married, you don't ever have to get divorced! Thanks, Maggie! As I've always said, a nation of bastard children is a nation of happy children.

Seriously, though. If Jenkins and Miller were a heterosexual couple, Miller wouldn't have been able to just elbow Jenkins out of the picture so easily. Unless Jenkins was a danger to her child (she isn't), she'd be allowed visitation if she were a dude and nobody would even be talking about this because it happens all the time.

Ex-wives and ex-husbands do ugly things to each other and, far too often, kids are trapped in the middle of it all. Allowing gay and lesbian couples to legally marry helps protect the kids that exist in many of these relationships, which is something Miller and the anti-gay horde she has supporting her would acknowledge if they really wanted to "protect" marriage.

A few minutes with: Joe Bailey of 'Based on a Totally True Story' at The Ringwald

BY DONALD V. CALAMIA


Joe Bailey

Since opening its doors in 2007, The Ringwald has become one of Metro Detroit's hottest and most talked-about theaters – where patrons can expect anything and everything from the latest comedy to edgy dramas – and, of course, the occasional men in dresses. Who Wants Cake? Theatre and The Ringwald recently announced changes to the current season, and co-founder and artistic director Joe Bailey talked recently about them – and in particular, his first show of 2010.

Who Wants Cake? Theatre has made some changes to its 2010 schedule. What precipitated these changes?

We were looking very forward to presenting the world premiere of "A Little Work," but unfortunately, working with a large cast around the holidays proved too difficult schedule-wise and we decided that there wasn't enough time to do proper justice to the script. So we opted to postpone it. That left a hole in the January slot, and because, like nature, I abhor a vacuum, I decided to fill it.

As for the February slot, we knew that once "[title of show]" became available we had to do it. We are all huge fans of that show. We hadn't consciously decided to produce three musicals in one season, but that's the magic of theater!

One of the changes is the somewhat sudden addition of "Based on a Totally True Story" to your January schedule – a Michigan premiere. How did this show become part of your schedule – and when did you guys decide to do it?

I don't rusticate well. Toward the end of last summer I had no projects lined up, so I started hosting these play readings, possibly with an eye toward producing something small should the project present itself. Nothing really panned out from that string of readings, but the idea stayed in my head.

Once January became a blank slate, I started them up again. I really wanted to do something intimate and gay-oriented...it was time to do one for the gays! A friend of mine who lives in New York had seen "True Story" and called me afterward saying he thought I should read it because he thought it would work well in our space. So I dug out the script and found that he was right!

What's the play about?

"Based on a Totally True Story" tells the story of Ethan Keene, who writes The Flash comic book. Along the way, a play that he has written has been optioned in Hollywood and he is hired by the larger-than-life producer to write the screenplay. As all of this is occurring, his relationship with his boyfriend begins to falter as does his parent's relationship.

What is it about the show that appeals to you as both a producer and a director?

The play is funny and endearing, and sweet and deceptively simple. Plus it has a small cast and a unit set – in this day and age that's a strong selling point right there!

My approach to this production was to really focus on the script and the performances. I kind of liken it to the recent revival of "Ragtime." There aren't a lot of bells and whistles, just a focus on the story and the relationships.

Looking over the cast list, it appears that regular patrons of The Ringwald will see a few new or fairly new faces on stage in this show. How did you go about casting the show – and what were you looking for when assembling your players?

Often when I read a script I will get someone's voice in my head. Vince Kelly had done such a wonderful job for us as Angel in "Rent, Jeff Bobick hammed it up in "Evil Dead," Geoff Pearson is a recent transplant to Detroit and we are thrilled to have him in his local stage debut.

And then there's Dan Morrison!

I called everybody up to come in for the first reading, primarily so I could hear the script and decide if I liked it well enough to go forward with it. I liked what everyone did at that reading and asked them all to take this crazy ride with me!

Is there anyone in particular that we should keep an eye out for?

Everyone is really splendid! Of course, with the incomparable Dyan Bailey (and we are no relation, by the way) on board, you know you're going to be in for a wild time.

The Ringwald has certainly had a string of critical and popular successes so far this season. What do you attribute that to?

Luck! Once you throw that theatrical spaghetti against the wall, you never know what's going to stick and what's not. Over the past few months we've managed to put together some dishes that folks wanted to sample.

We just try to pick shows that we like and hope that we don't screw it up along the way. It has been nice to have been able to grow our audience this year and to feel like people are responding to what it is we do.

What other treats should theatergoers expect from The Ringwald this season?

We are super excited about the rest of our season! After "Based on a Totally True Story," we have the Michigan premiere of the musical "[title of show]" followed by the powerhouse "Hurlyburly," then I will once again don a dress and kitten heels for Charles Busch's "Die! Mommie! Die!" Then...who knows?

About Joe Bailey:

Joe Bailey is the artistic director of Who Wants Cake? and The Ringwald Theatre. A native of Michigan, he has performed and directed at theaters across the country before contributing to the opening of The Ringwald in 2007.

Who Wants Cake Theatre will present "Based on a Totally True Story," a Michigan premiere, at The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale, Saturday-Monday Jan. 16 through Feb. 1. Tickets: $10-$20. For information: 248-545-5545 or www.whowantscaketheatre.com..

pridesource.com

Prop. 8: Fight for marriage equality hits courtroom

First days of Calif. trial tackle typical arguments for, against same-sex marriage; proceedings to continue for weeks

BY LISA KEEN

SAN FRANCISCO – The trial to challenge Proposition 8 in federal court got underway Jan. 11 in San Francisco, but the opening acts were upstaged in Washington, D.C. just minutes before the proceeding began.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy asked the full court to weigh in on the fairness of allowing videotaped proceedings of the trial be made available on YouTube and on closed circuit television in courthouses outside San Francisco. The one-page order, from which only Justice Stephen Breyer dissented, blocks viewing of the courtroom activities until at least Wednesday at 4 p.m. (EST).

U.S. District Court Judge Vaughn Walker, an appointee of President George H.W. Bush who is presiding over the case, Perry v. Schwarzenegger, told the courtroom Monday that his office had received 138,574 comments from people regarding whether to make the court proceedings available for delayed viewing on YouTube; only 32 of those opposed the idea, he said.

Also disturbing the proceedings Monday were some 100 protestors, mostly on the side of marriage equality, who rallied outside of the courthouse.



Top: From left Attorney David Boies, Attorney Ted Olson, Lady Booth Olson as the prepare for court appearance this past weekend. Below: Left are plaintiffs Kris Perry and Sandy Stier. To right are plaintiffs Paul Katami and Jeff Zarrillo. Photo: Diana Walker

The proceedings begin

Walker, who is chief of judges in the District Court for Northern California, looks like a slender Burl Ives and has the voice of Walter Cronkite. His style as a judge is both congenial and aggressive. Rather than allowing lead attorneys on both sides to deliver their requisite opening statements through soliloquies, Walker jumped in frequently, challenging various statements and asking what evidence the attorneys would be submitting to prove their claims.

"This case is about marriage and equality," said Ted Olson, the conservative legal icon who is leading the team challenging Proposition 8. "The Supreme Court of the United States has repeatedly described the right to marriage as 'one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men;' a 'basic civil right;' a component of the constitutional rights to liberty, privacy, association and intimate choice; an expression of emotional support and public commitment; the exercise of spiritual unity; and a fulfillment of one's self."

But before Olson could get much further into his prepared remarks, Walker interrupted with a question.

"Does the right to marriage mean you have a right to a marriage license from the state?"

"If the state regulates marriage, yes," said Olson.

"Why?" asked Walker

Olson seemed to acknowledge that the question was puzzling to him.

Later, playing devil's advocate again, Walker paraphrased an argument frequently used by opposing counsel, Charles Cooper.

"Mr. Cooper frequently makes the point that the court should not involve itself" in this dispute, said Walker. "That this is just the playing out of the political process. Why shouldn't the courts stand back?"



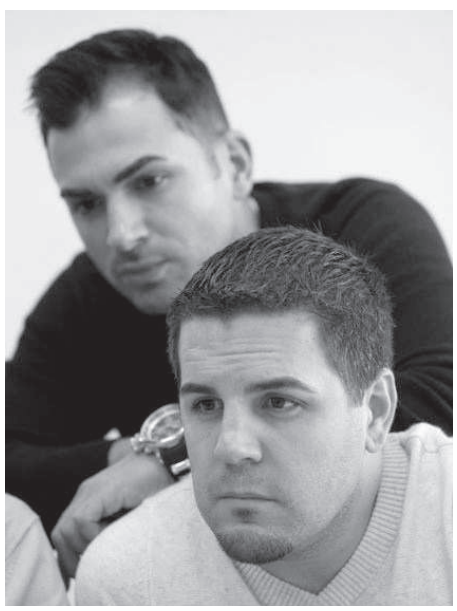
"Because that is why we have courts," Olson replied. "That is why we have a constitution We wouldn't need a constitution if we left everything to the political process."

Cooper, the lead attorney for the Yes on 8 team, said the people of California, in passing Proposition 8, were not seeking to express animosity for gay people but rather to "preserve the traditional definition marriage ... that has prevailed in virtually every society in recorded history."

He noted that President Barack Obama has also expressed opposition to same-sex marriages.

"If the president's parents had lived in Virginia, their marriage would have been unlawful," Walker responded, referring to the fact that President Obama's mother was white and his father was African American. "Doesn't that indicate there's been quite a change in our understanding of what people are entitled to marry? Couldn't an argument be made that there's been a similar evolution with respect to same-sex marriage?"

Walker also asked Cooper to explain what



evidence he would present to support his contention in court papers that allowing marriage licenses for same-sex couples would lead to a state of law in which bisexuals would have to be allowed to participate in "group marriages" – or polygamy.

Cooper said the argument was based on logic.

"If an individual has a right to marry the person of his or her choice to express love and have public recognition of that love," said Cooper, then it would be "difficult to say to a bisexual, if that individual loves two people, that that individual doesn't have the same right to express their love and have their love recognized by the state."

"It's not a far-fetched assumption in light of modern concepts of family," said Cooper.

"And it's not unheard of among heterosexuals, is it?" quipped Walker.

The first witnesses

There were a number of humorous and serious moments during this first day of trial – particularly during testimony by the lawsuit's four openly gay plaintiffs – Kristin Perry, Sandra Stier, Jeff Zarillo and Paul Katami.

In trying to respond to attorney David Boies, Olson's chief co-counsel in the case, about why he didn't think a domestic partnership was good enough, Katami, a 37-year-old group fitness manager in San Francisco, offered the metaphor of putting a Twinkie at the end of a treadmill and giving the person on the treadmill just one bite.

"I want that whole Twinkie," said Katami. He elaborated to explain that he wants "full marriage" not just partial benefits.

All four plaintiffs spoke movingly about how much they value their personal relationships and how much hurt and anguish they felt at hearing and seeing the "Yes on 8" campaign ads that suggested gay people and same-sex marriage posed some threat to children.

Perry, 45, a native of Illinois who moved to California when she was two, is a 25-year veteran of working in governmental agencies that seek to protect vulnerable children ages birth to five. And one of the reasons she and Stier wanted to get married was so that their own four children would have a clear understanding of their relationship.

When one uses the term marriage, said Perry, "children know what your relationship is ... and other people know what your relationship means."

Stier said it's distressing when she goes to "our son's school to pick him up and I have to explain who I am."

"Domestic partner or partner are not really that commonly known (terms)," she said, "and it doesn't reflect our relationship in a way that feels authentic. We're not business partners, we're not social partners, we're not glorified roommates."

"In the doctor's office, they ask are you single, married, or divorced," she said. The term marriage, she explained, "provides a sense of inclusion in the social fabric."

"I want to have that and would feel more respected by other people," said Stier. "I could hold my head up high. And I want our children to feel proud of us – not worried about us or that our family isn't good enough."

The history of freedom

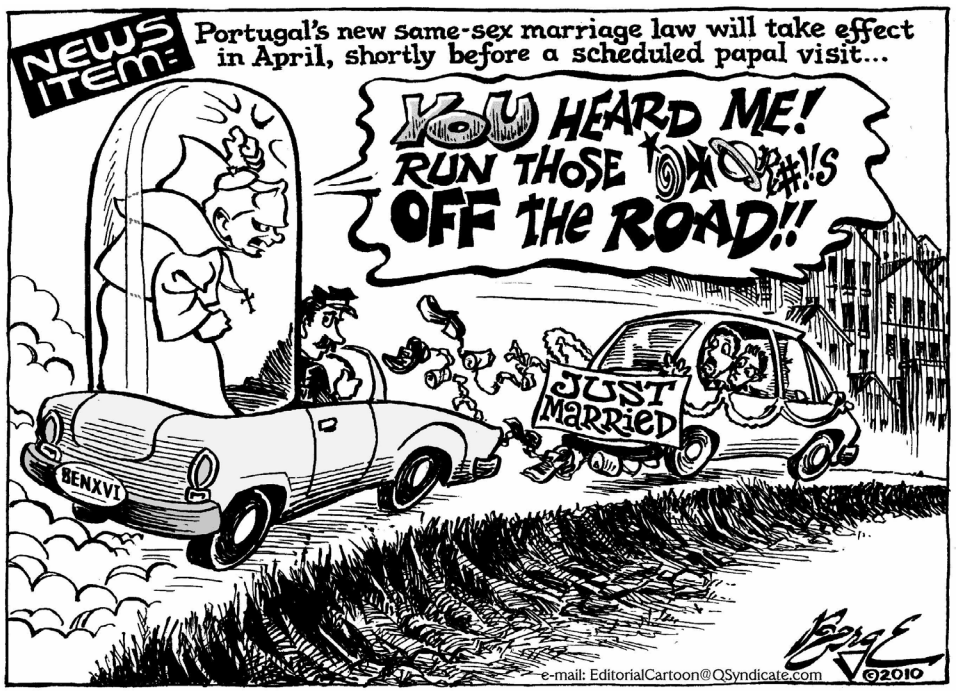
The fifth and last witness of the day was Harvard American history professor Nancy Cott, who was brought in to testify as an expert in the history of marriage in the United States.

Cott told the court that Yes on 8 attorneys' contention that marriage has always been between one man and one woman is simply "inaccurate."

"There have been many forms of marriage that are not one man and one woman," said Cott, adding that polygamy was sanctioned in ancient

See Prop. 8, page 12

Jan Stevenson *Publisher*
Susan Horowitz *Publisher/Editor*



BTL Editorial

Celebrating (HIV) positive lives

They are two vastly different people – one a gay, male dancer and choreographer, the other a straight, married mother and motivational speaker – but both have taken a diagnosis that could very well have meant death and turned it into a celebration of life.

So often throughout the history of the devastating epidemic, many of the stories we have heard about the impact of HIV/AIDS have centered on death, loss and anger. Not enough funding or treatment or prevention efforts. Not enough being done or said to stop the passing of loved ones. Way, way too much silence.

In this week's issue of Between The Lines, we celebrate two very different – but also intrinsically linked – stories of individuals who have triumphed over an HIV-positive diagnosis and have since spent their lives addressing both this and other important societal issues through their work.

Bill Jones is a New York-based choreographer, head of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and the creator of "Fondly Do We Hope, Fervently Do We Pray," a multimedia dance performance honoring the life and work of Abraham Lincoln that is coming to Ann Arbor's Power Center Jan. 22 and 23. Jones, who was diagnosed with HIV and lost his partner, Zane, to AIDS in the late 1980s, spoke out about the epidemic in his 1994 performance "Still/Here," complete with controversial dancers dressed as red blood platelets.

In another part the country is Rosie Hayes, a Michigan-raised ex-drug addict and sex worker who fought to escape her destructive lifestyle, only to come out with an HIV-positive diagnosis. Instead of retreating to her past ways, or even remaining silent, Hayes now tells her story across the nation to various groups, spreading inspiration and hope that there can be life after an HIV diagnosis.

And very full lives at that, in the cases of both Hayes and Jones.

They are two vastly different people. One is a gay male dancer, the other a straight, married mother and motivational speaker; one is college educated and classically trained, the other an escapee from a life on the streets. But both have taken a diagnosis that could very well have meant death and turned it into a celebration of life. Both have used their status as HIV positive to combat negative stigma surrounding the virus. Both are the types of stories that we, as advocates and sufferers in the epidemic, need to hear to keep ourselves optimistic, keep the work going and keep silence surrounding HIV/AIDS non-existent.

Both Jones and Hayes stand as proof that no matter where you come from or who you are, there is life after HIV, and it can be an incredibly fulfilling and meaningful life.

It's not to say that either touts their illness as no big deal. Jones' "Still/Here" explored the complications of survival and management though dance, combined with real-life interviews with people suffering from chronic illnesses. Hayes spreads her message of both hope – but also of keeping safe from the lifestyle she fell into – not only to her audiences, but to her own children.

And in sharing – whether though dance, song or simply discussion – the battle against HIV/AIDS continues. Hopefully, thanks to people like Jones and Hayes, with a little bit of optimism.

The Gay Moralist



Rebuking LaBarbera

One might argue that we shouldn't bother with LaBarbera. Indeed, a Christian friend of mine told me just that, stating that LaBarbera's comments are "no more worth writing about than the graffiti on men's room walls."

BY JOHN CORVINO

The column that follows is about anal sex.

Some friends have urged me against writing it, not because readers find frank discussions of anal sex "icky," but because the offending comments' source – Peter LaBarbera – is unworthy of serious attention.

In one sense these friends are quite right. But for reasons I hope to make clear, LaBarbera's most recent ugliness needs answering.

LaBarbera is the president of Americans for Truth About Homosexuality, one of the nastier anti-gay groups. In a recent letter at his Web site, he discusses how Matt Barber at Liberty Counsel (a right-wing legal group) is threatening to boycott the Conservative Political Action Conference unless CPAC drops the gay conservative group GOProud as a co-sponsor.

LaBarbera writes, "It boils down to this: there is nothing 'conservative' about – as Barber inimitably puts it – 'one man violently cramming his penis into another man's lower intestine and calling it love'."

Don't say I didn't warn you.

LaBarbera's post led Liberty Counsel to deny that Barber had ever said such a nasty thing, prompting a sharp rebuttal from LaBarbera, followed by Barber's admission that he had indeed made the comment privately years ago (and had given LaBarbera permission to quote it). This back-and-forth was interspersed with some barbs between LaBarbera and Randy Thomas, executive VP of the ex-gay group Exodus International, at Thomas's Exodus blog.

I'll focus here on LaBarbera, since he was the one who saw fit recently to post Barber's words and to defend them repeatedly, calling them "a brutally honest and necessarily accurate description of homosexual sodomy." He also challenged Thomas to "cite chapter and verse in the Bible" explaining why their use of these words is wrong.

Chapter and verse? Let me try.

Exodus 20:16: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." (Hint: it's one of the Ten Commandments, and it boils down simply to "Don't lie.")

Look, Peter – and I know you're reading this – *nobody* calls it love when a man "violently cram(s) his penis into another man's lower intestine." Nobody.

We sane people call that rape.

Indeed, the "violent cramming" of a penis into any bodily orifice, male or female, is rape. Not love. The description is not merely uncharitable (about which we could both cite many verses), it's a blatant falsehood.

Frankly, I'm not surprised you missed this simple, obvious point, because when it comes to homosexuality, you wouldn't know truth if it violently crammed itself into your – oh, never mind.

Now, one might argue that we shouldn't bother with LaBarbera. Indeed, a Christian friend of mine told me just that, stating that LaBarbera's comments are "no more worth writing about than the graffiti on men's room walls."

And I wish I could ignore them. I really, really do. If only the sentiments underlying them weren't so pervasive and harmful.

I've been defending gays and lesbians against heterosexist distortions for two decades. And one of the things that has saddened and angered me most is our opponents' continued tendency to reduce our lives, our commitments, and our intimacy to bare mechanical descriptions – and false ones at that.

Why do they do this? Perhaps it's because of a fundamental lack of empathy (a trait that forms the core of The Golden Rule, another biblical principle).

Or perhaps it's because they know that dehumanizing us in this way is an extremely effective tactic. As LaBarbera himself writes at the Exodus blog, his and Barber's "colorful and dismissive" language are precisely geared to "re-stigmatize shameful homosexual behavior."

Stigmatize, it surely does.

By spreading their lies about "violent cramming" and such, LaBarbera, Barber and their ilk have visited needless suffering upon countless LGBT people, particularly LGBT youth.

Among the unspoken casualties of such stigmatization is that it makes it harder for us to have frank conversations about the relative risks of various sexual practices, for fear of feeding such nastiness. The upshot is more silence, and shame, and – paradoxically – risk.

All of which LaBarbera and Barber can answer to their Maker for, when and if Judgment Day should come. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

John Corvino, Ph.D. is an author, speaker, and philosophy professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. For more about John Corvino, or to see clips from his "What's Morally Wrong with Homosexuality?" DVD, visit www.johncorvino.com.

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

– First Amendment, U.S. Constitution

S/he said

COMPILED BY HOWARD ISRAEL

"I saw so many pictures of naked men that I now have a condition called 'dick lash.' My eyes hurt from taking in so much male pulchritude. I swore when I went to the gym later that I wouldn't even glance at any of the glistening weight room boys. After a few hours of nothing but pictures of gorgeous, barely dressed, sometimes butt ass naked men, I have come to a conclusion. Gay men are to male photography like Mormons are to genealogy. If you are a man, straight or gay, that has ever had a naked or semi-naked photograph taken of you, or just a picture of your dick, or any sort of provocative picture at all, then the gays have it on a Web site. You exist somewhere in gay cyberspace."

- Lisa Brower, heterosexual humor writer, in her blog titled "Dick Lash: Damage to the neck caused by sudden, unexpected pictures of naked men," about her internet research for a gay blog site, www.mikealvear.com, June 16, 2009.



"As a student at Thornridge high school on the south side of Chicago, I never made enough of an impression to warrant mockery. It wasn't until later in life that I discovered I was gay, so I missed out on the taunting experienced by the gay character on Glee. I didn't know what 'gay' was in high school. We used the word 'queer' when someone was weird – when I finally heard what it really meant, my heart sank, and I thought, 'Oh God, that's me.' I barely think about being an openly gay actor in Hollywood. I think if I were an ingénue – if I were Kate Winslet – it probably would hurt my career, but because I'm Jane Lynch and I'm a character actor, the world isn't projecting their romantic fantasies on me."

- Jane Lynch, openly lesbian star of hit TV show "Glee," playing the "delicious" villain, Sue Sylvester the villain, in an interview, www.guardian.co.uk, Jan. 9.

"Homosexuals can forget about human rights."

- James Nsaba Buturo, Ugandan Minister of Ethics and Integrity and Minister of Information and Broadcasting, in a frequently stated message, regarding the proposed Ungandan bill that would impose the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality," including by those who are HIV positive, criminalize public discussion of homosexuality and could penalize an individual who knowingly rent property to a homosexual, www.nytimes.com, Jan. 5.



"I was born in the 1970s, before the law changed, when homosexuality was illegal in Portugal until 1982. So for anyone who remembers that time, this is an incredible victory. But it's not just our victory, it's a victory for all – opening up rights to everybody.

- Manel Mira, Lisbon native and volunteer for Portugal's branch of the International Lesbian and Gay Association, in an interview about Portugal's parliament approval of a measure to legalize gay marriage, www.sphere.com, Jan. 10.

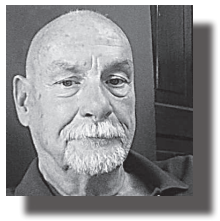
"One by one, other states would fall into Satan's hands. Every child, when growing up, would fantasize marrying someone of the same sex. More children would become homosexuals. I dedicated the majority of my working hours between January 2008 and November 2008 toward qualifying Proposition 8 for the ballot and campaigning for its enactment. In the past I have received threats on my life, had my property vandalized and am recognized on the streets due to my association with Proposition 8. Now that the subject lawsuit is going to trial, I fear I will get more publicity, be more recognizable and that the risk of harm to me and my family will increase.

- Hak-Shing William Tam, outspoken gay marriage opponent in California and official litigant defending the state's ban on same-sex weddings, in a written statement to the judge in the lawsuit and trial scheduled to start, asking to be removed from the lawsuit because he fears retribution for his participation in the passage of Prop. 8, www.insidebayarea.com, Jan. 9.

"What is noteworthy about this appointment is not that a transgender person is serving this administration – many transgender people work for the federal government – the real story is that Amanda Simpson was selected based on her exemplary credentials and not because she is transgender. Countless transgender people are overlooked every day for jobs they can do very well. When an employer does not discriminate based on gender identity, they have access to more highly qualified people. That's what happened here."



- Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, in her blog titled "Look what happens when discrimination does not take place – qualified people get jobs," about the appointment of Amanda Simpson by the Obama Administration as a Senior Technical Advisor to the Department of Commerce, http://transgenderequality.wordpress.com/, Jan. 4.



Parting Glances
Then & Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Uganda, a forked tale

It's been countless centuries since proud Lucifer, an Angel of Light, was cast from heaven by the Almighty to roam the earth at will, seeking faithful but mindless minions to do his nefarious bidding.

Lucifer found three such servants recently. He sent them a continent away on a mission to a people not their own.

Though Lucifer's image is ever tarnished – may one add tongue in cheek: but polishable – reflecting moon rather than sun – in cold, chilling luminosity – he still reigns a conniver of auras, nimbuses, neon-tipped theocratic pretenses. Mask maker to the self-righteous.

Who among us hasn't met up with him in some dimly lit dark night of the soul, been offered low-watt radiance, given artificial warmth from the eternal cold? (Those weary from dead-end journeys are tempted to linger.)

Who among us hasn't listened, enthralled, to his buddy-buddy voice, "Hey guys, follow me. My kingdom's yours. At least for the duration of your mortal sojourn in this crazy spooked-up place."? In truth, who among us hasn't had his or her forty days of wilderness wandering? Sometimes seemingly lost without valid passport?

We are mistaken if for a moment we think following this prevaricator of pie-in-the-sky will mean his power, his allegiance, is gained only by actions that are philosophically questionable. Quite, quite the contrary.

Often the Luciferian kingdom is leased out in the name of good. The wall separating Hell from Heaven – Church from State – is so paper thin in places that music from one side mingles with rhythms from the other, becoming a dance of death.

We all know of beings that are evil. Fallen angels. Demons. Vampires. Of the latter: their popularity is legion. Movies. Posters. Sitcoms. Magazines. Still, there is afoot a new breed – shall we call them Circa 2010? – a mutation of vampires.

More intrinsically deadly. They shun not daylight. They are predatory 24/7. (But never on Sunday.) They do not recoil in abject horror from the crucifix. They wear it openly. They greet each of their brethern with a holy kiss. They tithe their 30 pieces of silver.

Most curious of all, they can see their own reflection in a mirror – dimly perhaps – even though that same mirror clearly reflects mortals they fear most. A glimpse reminds these hybrid vampires of their own inner self. Thus, their blood lust begins to boil. But in a nice, evangelical way.

And always this new breed of faith-fanged will hiss between sharpened teeth, "Love the sinner. Hate the sin," before striking again and again. "The life of all flesh is in the blood," they've been told. The good book says so. Never question it.

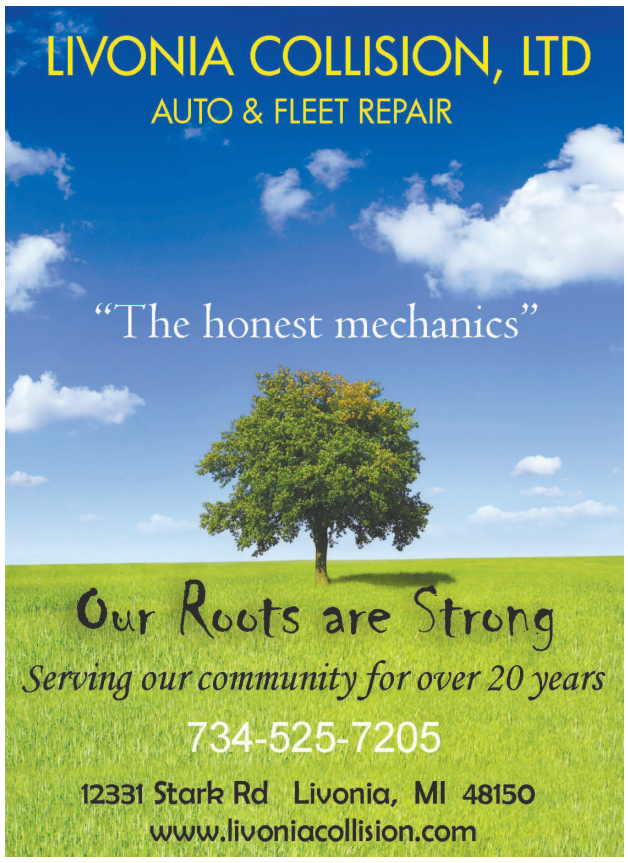
(Their ancestors came here and brought with them their scripture. In exchange they took native land. These days, not welcome in lands with other books – India, China, Saudi Arabia – they seek out their prey in continents like South America and Africa.)

So an Unholy Three, vampires of holy disguise – all smiles, all hugs of deceptive greeting – all mouthing praise and prayer – all giving hallelujah lip service from our shores – sought to victimize abroad any and all who might listen.

"Hear us, good people of Uganda. We come in the name of a bearer of end-times radiance. We come with a message of hope and everlasting good cheer! Homosexuality is an abomination! A sickness! Homosexuals will seduce your children! They'll rape your country! Are you listening, Uganda? Strike first. Stone them! Before they destroy you!

"In the name of the Angel of Light. The Prince of Principalities. Go for the jugular! But have a blessed day doing it. Yea, verily. We come in peace. Please don't shoot the messengers."

Charles@pridesource.com







Uganda lawmaker refuses to withdraw anti-gay bill

Opposition ignored as gay 'death penalty' movement pushes forward

BY GODFREY OLUKYA

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) – A Ugandan lawmaker on Jan. 8 refused to withdraw proposed legislation that would impose the death penalty for some gays and lesbians despite international condemnation and presidential opposition to a measure that could scare off foreign investors.

Lawmaker David Bahati said he will not heed a call late Jan. 7 from the government to drop the proposed bill, as he feels such a measure is necessary in the conservative East African country.

On Thursday, Minister of State for Investment Aston Kajara said the government would ask Bahati to scrap the bill because they fear backlash from foreign investors. The bill, which Bahati proposed in September, has provoked criticism from gay rights groups and protests in London, New York and Washington, D.C.

"I stand by the bill," Bahati said. "I will not withdraw it. We have our children in schools to protect against being recruited into (homosexuality). The process of legislating a law to protect our children against homosexuality and defending our family values must go on."

That leaves the decision to the country's parliament, which will discuss the legislation in late February or early March.

Although President Yoweri Museveni has told colleagues he believes the bill is too harsh and has encouraged his ruling National Resistance Movement Party to overturn the death sentence provision, Information Minister Kabakumba Matsiko said the parliament will act independently of the presidency.

"The bill did not come from the executive," she said. "It is a private members bill."

Under the new law, the death sentence could apply to sexually active gays living with HIV or in cases of same-sex rape. The new law also expands its scope to include Ugandans living abroad, who can be extradited and punished.

Earlier last week, several lawmakers and officials from the ruling party said they will push to remove the death penalty statute, and have proposed instead that gays receive counseling to convert them to heterosexuality.

The proposed legislation would toughen Uganda's already strict laws against homosexuality, which are bolstered by Uganda's conservative society, which generally frowns on homosexuality.

Lawmakers outlawed gay marriage in 2005. The proposed legislation is being touted as an update to Uganda's old statutes against homosexuality, which date from the 1950s and do not address homosexuality by name, only what the law terms as "unnatural offenses" and "gross indecency."

The draft of the new bill says anyone convicted of a homosexual act – which includes touching someone of the same sex with the intent of committing a homosexual act – could face life imprisonment. Current legislation imposes seven years' imprisonment. Under the new law, the death sentence could apply to sexually active gays living with HIV or in cases of same-sex rape. The new law also expands its scope to include Ugandans living abroad, who can be extradited and punished.

Kajara said government officials worried the bill would scare off investors.

"Ever since the bill was tabled, there have been a lot of outcries not only here but from all over the world," he said. "There has been negative publicity on Uganda which is not good for investment. As government, we shall talk to the private member who brought it to parliament and request him to withdraw it."

The measure was proposed in Uganda following a visit by leaders of U.S. conservative Christian ministries that promote therapy for gays to become heterosexual. However, at least one of those leaders has denounced the bill, as have some other conservative and liberal Christians in the United States.

On the African continent, South Africa is the only country that allows gay marriage. However, some South African groups have rejected homosexuality as "un-African" and gangs carry out so-called "corrective" rapes on lesbians. A 19-year-old lesbian athlete was gang-raped, tortured and murdered in 2008.

The Catholic church in Uganda has said it supports the bill, but not the death penalty provision. But a group of non-traditional churches has accused Museveni of siding with gays and maintains that the Bible supports killing gays. Anglican Archbishop of York John Sentamu, who is one of the global fellowship's most senior priests, has said he condemns the proposed law in his native country.



► Prop. 8

Continued from p. 9

Judaism and is prevalent in Muslim cultures today. She said the prevalence of monogamy in the United States is attributable to "the success of Christian evangelism."

Cott explained marriage as being an expression of liberty.

"Slaves could not marry legally because unfree persons could not consent" to marriage, said Cott.

Cott noted that the famous U.S. Supreme Court case involving Dred Scott was illustrative. The 1857 decision held that a black man could not be considered a citizen of this country and was not entitled to any of the privileges of citizenship, even in states that prohibited slavery. That included the right to marry.

Cott said she sees "parallels" between Proposition 8 and the restrictions against slaves being able to marry in pre-Civil War America. Slaves still formed marriages, she noted, but slave owners could break up those relationships and did so "all the time, and no state authority gave any protection or credence to these relationships."

As of press time, Cott's testimony was set to resume at 8:30 Pacific time on the morning of Jan. 13.

International

by Rex Wockner



Portuguese couple Teresa Pires, right, and Helena Paixão, who lost a same-sex marriage case before Portugal's Constitutional Court last July, celebrate Parliament's Jan. 8 legalization of same-sex marriage. PortugalGay.pt photo

Portuguese same-sex marriage bill passes

As expected, Portugal's Parliament passed a bill Jan. 8 to legalize same-sex marriage. The vote was 125-92 with seven abstentions.

President Aníbal Cavaco Silva is not expected to veto the bill, but even if he does, it would delay the law only by a few weeks. Should Cavaco Silva sign the bill, the first gay marriages will happen in April.

Socialist Prime Minister José Sócrates said legalizing same-sex marriage "rights a wrong" and increases freedom and equality.

The bill specifically excludes access to adoption for married same-sex couples.

"This is the main step towards same-sex civil marriage in Portugal, but not the last one," said correspondent João Paulo from PortugalGay.pt. "The president can still delay the implementation of the law."

The board co-chair of the European Region of ILGA, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, said same-sex marriage is rapidly becoming the norm in Europe.

"It is truly a fantastic start of 2010 for LGBT people in Portugal and Europe as a whole," said Martin K.I. Christensen. "It is clear that a European consensus is fast emerging on marriage equality."

In addition to signing or vetoing the bill, President Cavaco Silva has a third option, correspondent Paulo said. He could send it to the Constitutional Court because of the adoption exclusion.

The court would then pronounce the bill constitutional or not. If the court said it is constitutional, Parliament would pass it again in the same form. If the court said it is unconstitutional, Parliament likely would pass a bill that legalizes same-sex marriage and opens adoption to married same-sex couples, which neither the president nor the prime minister supports.

Mexico City gay marriage law takes effect in March

Mexico City's law allowing same-sex marriage will take effect in March.

It was approved by the Legislative Assembly on Dec. 21 and published in the official register on Dec. 30.

Legislators voted 39-20 for the bill, which redefines "marriage" as "the free uniting of two people."

The bill also explicitly legalizes adoption by gay couples.

Federal benefits, such as pension, inheritance and social security rights, will remain off-limits to married gay couples without changes in federal law to recognize the Mexico City marriages.

City officials say they hope gay couples will come from around the world to get married. The city is working with travel agencies to offer packages that include flights, hotel, sightseeing, a wedding and a banquet.

Same-sex marriage also is legal in Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Spain and Sweden; in Argentina's Tierra del Fuego province; and in the U.S. states of Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. It will become legal in March in Washington, D.C., and in Portugal later this year.

'Engaged' gay couple jailed in Malawi

Two men in Blantyre, Malawi, got engaged to be married in a traditional ceremony Dec. 26, local media reported.

Tiwonge Chimbalanga, 20, and Steven Monjeza, 26, formalized their relationship before hundreds of observers, then were promptly arrested and charged with gross public indecency and unnatural practices between males.

The couple pleaded not guilty in a Dec. 30 court appearance, after which prosecutors threatened that medical tests would be performed to prove the couple had sex together. They remain jailed at Chichiri prison.

Gay sex is banned in Malawi under threat of up to 14 years in prison.

Amnesty International on Jan. 6 demanded the men be released, saying "their rights to freedom of conscience, expression and privacy" have been violated and they are "prisoners of conscience."

"Steven Monjeza and Tiwonge Chimbalanga have committed no criminal offense and should be immediately and unconditionally released," said Amnesty International UK Director Kate Allen. "The Malawian authorities' attempt to subject them to forcible anal examinations is appalling. Such practices and the criminalization of homosexuality in Malawi should be ended without delay."

In the meantime, on Jan. 4, Malawian police arrested Bunker Kamba, an activist from the Centre for the Development of People, for possessing "pornographic" HIV education materials.

Kamba was released on bail. Amnesty said police also want to arrest CEDEP activist Gift Trapence on the same charges.

Serbian gay film festival deemed a 'success'

Serbian LGBT activists say the nation's first International Queer Film Festival, "Merlinka," staged in December in Belgrade, was a "success."

Ten films were shown over four days, and a public discussion titled "Gay and lesbian moments in domestic film" was attended by actresses Ana Franic and Lena Bogdanovic, actor Aleksandar Lazic and directors Mladen Dordevic and Zelimir Zilnik.

The audience award, called "Dorothy's Shoe," was given to Canadian Bruce LaBruce's gay zombie film "Otto; or, Up with Dead People."

The festival is named after the late transgender actress Vjeran Miladinovic ("Merlinka") who starred in Zilnik's film "Marble Ass."

Supporters of the festival included the French Cultural Center, the British Council, the Goethe Institute and the Center for Nonviolent Action.

Iranian transgenders reclassified

Iran's military will no longer classify transgender people as "mentally disturbed," said Hasan Mousavi Chelk, who heads the Socially Vulnerable Groups section of the State Agency for National Well-Being.

Chelk said Jan. 6 that putting such a determination on transgender people's military discharge papers creates problems for them.

From now on, transgender people being separated from the military will be labeled as "diabetics" or "people with a hormonal imbalance," he said.

In reality, Chelk said, Iran's 4,000 self-identified transgender people have a "sexual identity disorder." They are citizens, he said, and the government views them "favorably."

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Tom Ford

The Other 'Man'

The fashionista-turned-filmmaker dishes on his directorial debut, the loss he endured to make it and why it's more than a gay movie



By Chris Azzopardi

All you know about Tom Ford isn't it. The style savvy man we're familiar with through the fashion-world lense – as Gucci's former creative director for 10 years – is more than that debonair hunk-and-a-half. Much of Ford's unknown facets are in his directorial debut, "A Single Man" – award bait starring Colin Firth as George, a suicidal gay man suffering from his longtime partner's death.

Ford spoke with us about reactions to his first film, what the movie says about him personally and why – as a gay man – he'd have no problem taking a whiff of a woman.

The film has picked up numerous award nods and lots of Oscar momentum. You're floating on Cloud 9 now, aren't you?

I'm on Cloud 9 because everyone has responded really almost unanimously positively. That's a great feeling, when you know that you've created something that speaks to a lot of people.

Is this attention giving you a push to pursue film further?

Well, I'm so stubborn that I was going to do more no matter what (laughs). I never intended to make just one film; I always intended that this one would be my first. So even had I really failed, I would be doing it again. I can't wait to get started on the next one.

Despite the universal, humanistic quality of the film, it still felt pretty gay, though you don't like to call it that, right?

I hate categorizing things. I wanted to depict a gay relationship in a very matter-of-fact way, and that was one of the things that always drew me to Christopher Isherwood's writing, because when he wrote this book in 1964, it was a landmark piece of gay literature. It was so matter-of-fact. There was no issue.

I've lived with the same man for 23 years, and much of the film is taken from my own life. I will have someone still say to me "your lifestyle." And I say, "My lifestyle? What is that?" I live with somebody I love. We make dinner at home together. We lie around and read books and watch television and walk our dogs and go on vacation and argue occasionally – that's a lifestyle? That's what I meant. That's what I wanted to depict – just a very straightforward love story.

While making the film, did you think about how you would react if you were in George's shoes?

I was in George's shoes, but it wasn't over the loss of a lover. It was really the loss of a career, and I had made a major shift and left something that I had been doing for 15 years. All of a sudden, I had no identity and I had no voice in contemporary culture, and it fell at a time when I had what is really a very classic midlife crisis.

I was lucky enough to have everything early in life, including a great relationship and everything the material world can offer – a successful career, lots of money, a great life, friends – and yet I couldn't find a certain kind of happiness. When I left Gucci, it just really pushed me into a kind of tailspin because I had no way to express myself, and I was really grieving that. That was my relationship to the book.

So reading Christopher's book later on in life influenced you differently than when you first read it?

Oh yeah. Reading it when I was young, I was living in L.A. and I was single and I fell in love with George. I loved him as a character, and it was so perfectly written I

See Ford, page 20




The cast of Players' "Importance of Being Earnest."

Birmingham theater to present timeless Oscar Wilde comedy

"The Importance of Being Earnest," arguably Oscar Wilde's funniest comedy, opens at the Village Players Jan. 22. Audiences who saw Players' 1977 production remember this classic fondly as one of its best productions.

That production featured Joyce McGookey of Royal Oak as the ingenue, Cecily. In this production, Joyce is in the older role of "Miss Prism." But fellow cast members contend the still youthful looking McGookey could again be cast as the ingenue.

A member of Village Players since 1974, the role of Cecily was McGookey's first appearance on stage at Village Players. It remains her favorite role, but she is enjoying development of the prim-and-proper older woman who excites the attention of the Rev. Cannon Chasuble, played by Ferndale resident Greg Bowman, familiar to many as the Mid-day News Anchor on WWJ Radio in Detroit.

Playing Cecily in the new production is Katie Jensen of Rochester Hills. "I am thrilled to play this role, as Oscar Wilde is one of my favorite playwrights," she said in a press release.

Kate E. Rasmussen of Troy, who plays the sophisticated Gwendolyn, is a graduate of Western Michigan's Music Theatre Performance program. Ramussen, who usually performs in musicals, said, " I am excited to be cast in my first straight show in nine years – and a great role!"

Oscar Wilde was known for writing great roles for women, and among them is the indomitable Lady Bracknell, played by Valerie Mould. Although the whole cast will play their roles with English accents, Mould is the only one who comes by one naturally. The British native is a freelance choreographer, who just completed directing the dancers in Village Players' last production, "Hello, Dolly."

And as good as the women's roles are in "Earnest," the men's are at least their equal. As the two young men who woo ladies and comment on the manners of the day, Marc Rosati and Jeff Davison enjoy a bonanza of lines, bound to cause laugh-out-loud moments and big smiles.

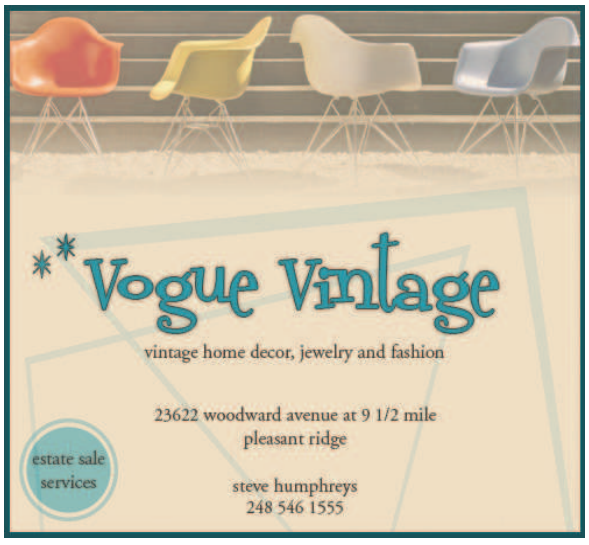
Showtimes for "The Importance of Being Earnest" are as follows: 8 p.m. Jan. 22-23, 29-30; 2 p.m. Jan. 24 and 31. Village Players Playhouse is located at 34660 Woodward, Birmingham (two blocks south of Maple). Tickets are $15. For more information, call 248-644-2075 or visit www.birminghamvillageplayers.

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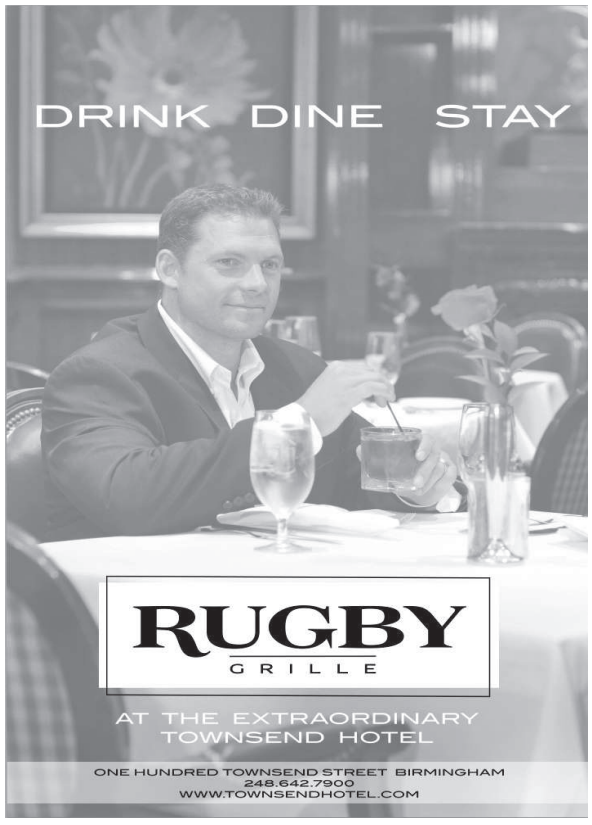
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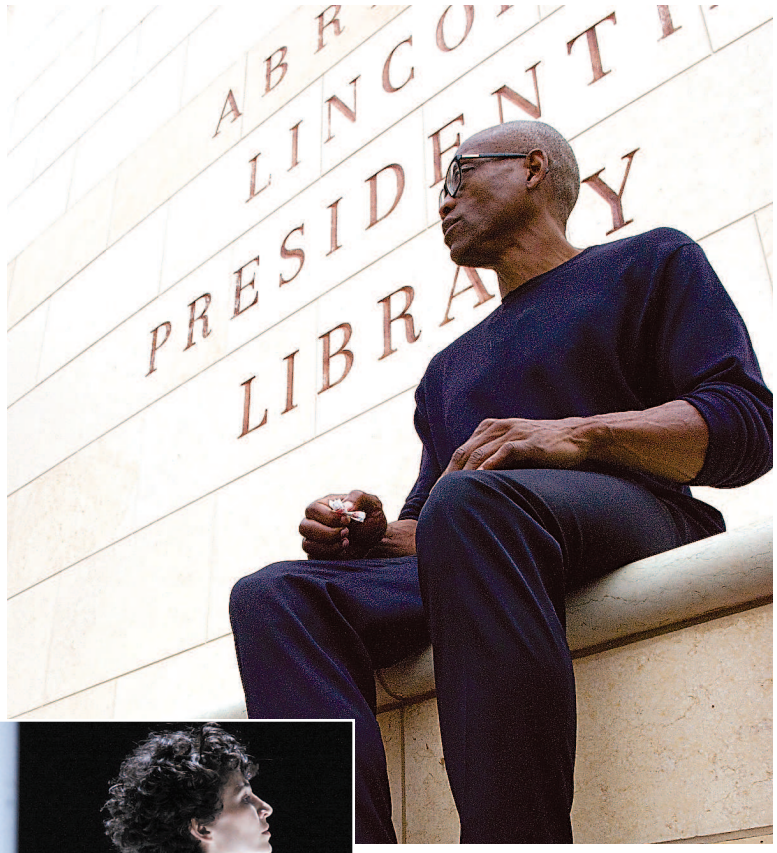




Dancing Through Life

Out director Bill T. Jones takes on iconic president's legacy in emotional Ann Arbor-bound production

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI





Above: Bill T. Jones. *Left*: Paul Matteson and Asli Bulbul in "Fondly Do We Hope ... Fervently Do We Pray" (Photo: Paul B. Goode).

Bill T. Jones will live to see 150. That's what the dancer-turned-director tells himself, anyway. It's a credo that's helped him defy aging, as the HIV he's had since the '80s – and his body, which began dancing formally at the unusually late age of 19 – tries to tell him otherwise.

He can't move like a teenager anymore, though, and so he feeds dancers with still-gummy bodies the direction to do so. In "Fondly Do We Hope ... Fervently Do We Pray," inspired by Abraham Lincoln's legacy and set for performances Jan. 22-23 at Ann Arbor's Power Center, that dexterity is showcased. Not by Jones, though, who won't be fervently whipping his legs around in passionate swooshes. His last performance before retiring was at the Louvre in Paris two years ago. Or so he said. Lately, the inner performer in Jones is demanding some attention. Body, be damned.

"The performer's asking the director, 'Can you make something that will take into consideration my 57-year-old body with my bad knees and lower back, that has less stamina than it used to?'" says Jones, who's spent the last 28 years choreographing some of the most button-pushing pieces under his production company, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company.

After AIDS took his partner Arnie Zane in the late '80s, he tackled the epidemic in 1994's "Still/Here" with controversial chutzpah, dressing dancers in red blood platelet-looking costumes.

These days, Jones doesn't care to instigate a fuss. "I leave that to the younger generation," he laughs; the tone of his voice – and the initial gasp-then-laugh – offers an "I'm-too-old-for-that-shit" exclamation without him giving it. With "Fondly," he's focused on the historical relevance and the absorbing emotional aspects of Lincoln's life, as it celebrates the legendary leader's bicentennial.

It almost didn't happen. Thinking of it as a mere black history piece, Jones just about passed on the project – until he tore through three varied, historically-thick books that piqued his interest. "I was so excited about my research, my rediscovery of Abraham Lincoln," he gushes.

Then he thought of the modern-day parallels, how nearly every president pretends he's Lincoln, ready to uphold values and make tough choices and mimic his indelible attitude.

"He is the everyman and what Americans like to pride themselves on being – this honest individual with the highest morality," he says.

Jones, having grown up during the peak of the Civil Rights struggle, recalls his history-conscious schooling, when he had to memorize the Gettysburg Address. An experiment performed at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco to test the average person's knowledge of Lincoln revealed that not everyone is well-versed in history. One person thought he became president in 1916.

"The answers were astoundingly ignorant," Jones recalls. "I thought that this work might be able to just jog people's memories."

And make them feel something with a very modernistic approach, one that's geared toward the Web world and TV watchers. Images are clean and crisp and sometimes connected with spoken word, and contemporary and historical sound bytes accompany the sophisticated sights.

This is the way Jones sees dance – as art, provoking and asking questions. Not as a hip reality-show contest trying to drive television ratings, like "So You Think You Can Dance" or "Dancing With the Stars."

"I don't think I'm of the same planet," he laughs. "I don't think dance is a sport. It should be something more ritualized and much more introspective if it's going to be dance. Having said that, I am really wrestling right now with understanding how the dance that I make will be absorbed by mass culture.

"I'm thinking a lot about what's next for my company and what's next for me in that regard, because I'm not really so interested in being in the ivory tower or the art ghetto of the avant garde, which produced me and cut my teeth. I'm a little tired of it right now, actually."

All the more reason for him to unleash the caged dancer. Sometimes it escapes; at parties, he'll spontaneously slide a seat in and take center stage.

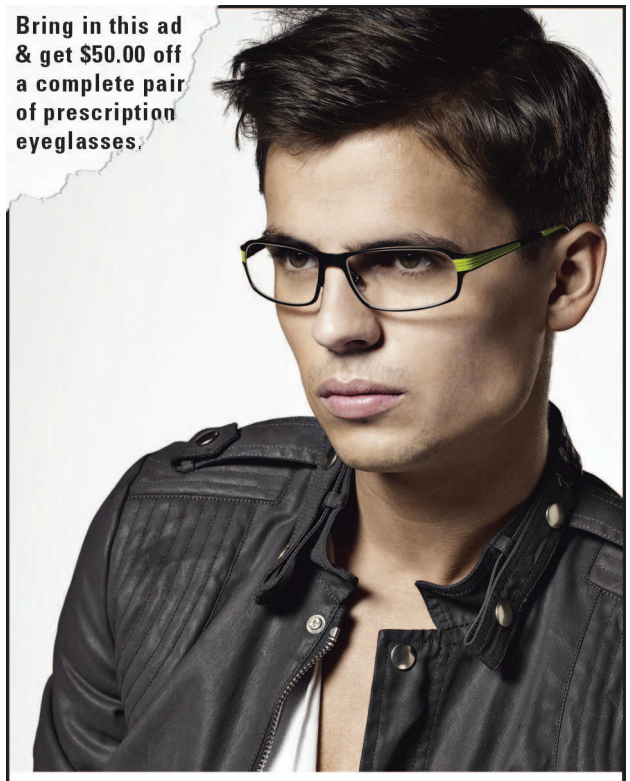
When Jones thinks of that resurfaced desire, he remembers a joke about Melissa Hayden, a glorious New York City ballet dancer in the '60s: how she loved dancing so much that someone would have to yank her off stage and chain her down.

He laughs as he tells the story. "I'm not that shameless."

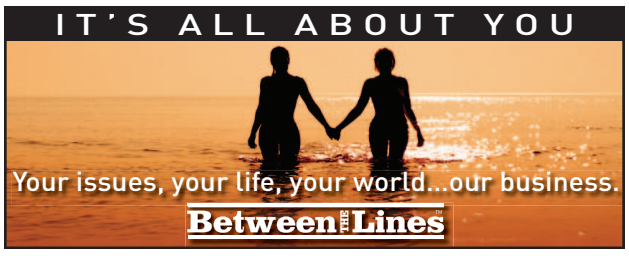
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Bill T. Jones will also speak as part of the Penny W. Stamps Series: A Question of Strategy and Objectives from 5:10-7 p.m. Jan. 21 at the Michigan Theater (603 E. Liberty Street, Ann Arbor).



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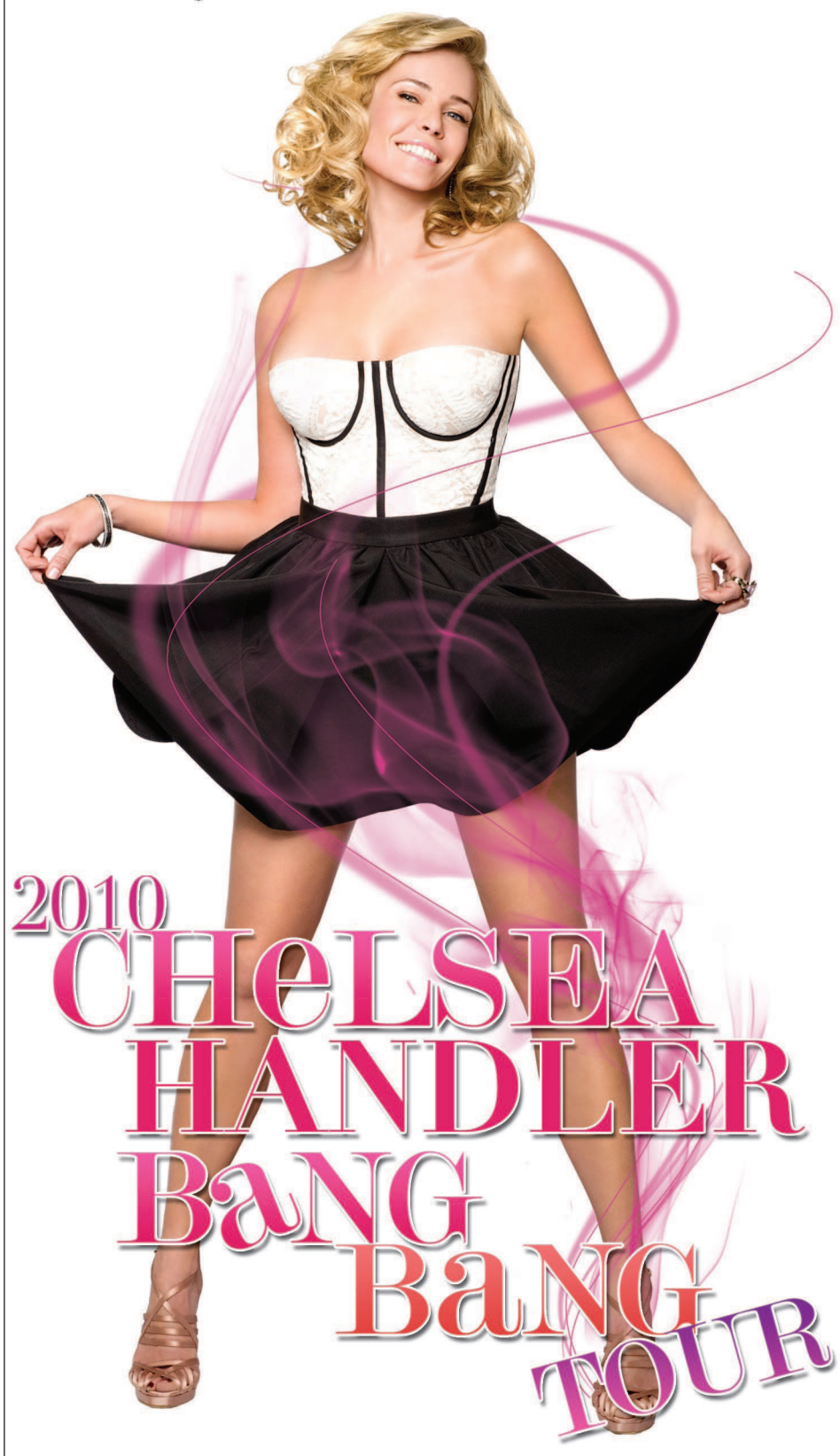
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Late night drama stuns at Planet Ant

BY DONALD V. CALAMIA

While bible-thumpers and "throw-the-book-at-them" jurists may tell you that certain Judeo-Christian and legal pronouncements are immutable, those of us living in the real world understand that life is not all black and white or good and evil. Rather, our day-to-day journey is filled with limitless shades of gray - and that reasonable people, while guided by those long-held principles, may have to make shocking and life-altering decisions that run contrary to the rules society holds dear.

That's the dilemma playwright Margaret Edwartowski examines in "Snowbound," the stunning and powerful late-night drama now playing at Planet Ant Theatre.

Set in 1870, what's left of the once-proud Adler family struggles to survive another brutal winter in their remote cabin on a mountain near Central City, Colorado. Evaline (Connie Cowper) and her now-deceased husband arrived years earlier in search of gold, but a rough existence has reduced the family to her grandchildren Sara (Jenny Tocco) and John (Stephen Blackwell), whose wife recently died giving birth to their daughter.

When friend and local farmer Wil Starkey (Jon Ager) arrives with an offer to relocate the near-starving family to his home near town for the winter, John refuses his charity - despite his sister's plea to accept it. Weeks later, as the heavy snows arrive, Wil returns and finds the Adlers in bad shape. With little time to leave before the pass gets cut off by the inclement weather, tough decisions must be made - or all will likely starve or freeze to death by winter's end.

It's a horrifying situation, which playwright Edwartowski pulls no punches exploring. Few decisions we make in our lifetimes are truly life-or-death resulting, but that's what her characters face in "Snowbound" - and their various reactions to their situation are as realistic as one could imagine. For Edwartowski, whose name and reputation in the local theater community come from her work in comedies and improv - her first attempt at crafting a well-told drama is near flawless.

To read the complete review, log on to www.EncoreMichigan.com or www.pridesource.com.

REVIEW

'Snowbound'

A Late Night show at Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. 9:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays through Jan. 23. $10. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Actors keep comedy aloft at Meadow Brook

BY MARTIN F. KOHN

If "Boeing-Boeing" seems old-fashioned, it isn't because door-slamming farces belong in the past or that no one today could ever have three fiancées and keep them unknown to each other. The world will always make room for comedies where important characters just miss seeing each other and recent news accounts tell of a man with three wives (a trigamist?) none of whom had any idea the others existed.

Nope, what makes French playwright Marc Camoletti's 1965 comedy appear quaint is the notion that air travel was once considered glamorous and relatively easy and that flight attendants were viewed in much the same light.

And lucky Bernard, a swinging American bachelor in Paris, is engaged to three "air hostesses": Janet, who's American (and loud); Jacqueline, who's French (and loud), and Judith, who's German (and loud). One woman takes off; another lands; the third is somewhere between continents.

It's a pretty sweet deal for Bernard, but if it goes on indefinitely there won't be much of a play. Actually, it isn't much of a play - for a comedy with seven doors (one of them literally swinging) there is surprisingly little door-slamming - but good acting can more than compensate for that, and Travis W. Walter's Meadow Brook Theatre production has good acting in abundance.

Delivering a delightfully comic performance is Steve Blackwood as Bernard's old friend Robert, who drops in unexpectedly from Ohio. He sticks around in awe, admiration and, ultimately, consternation, a state Blackwood is a master at portraying, more with his face and body than the words the dramatist provides.

Correspondingly impressive is Karen Sheridan as Bernard's wry French maid, Bertha, who garners laughs just by widening her eyes or pushing the swinging door.

As Bernard, Christopher Howe gets a lot more animated when he explains his ingenious juggling act than he does discussing the prospect of almost nonstop sex with three attractive women - which seems absolutely right.

To read the complete review, log on to www.EncoreMichigan.com or www.pridesource.com.

REVIEW

'Boeing-Boeing'

Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Wednesday-Sunday through Jan. 31. $30-$39. 248-377-3300. www.mbtheatre.com

'Act Your Wage' pays out no dividends

BY D. A. BLACKBURN

It's hard to laugh about the current state of our economy. News of layoffs, bailouts, plant closings and bankruptcies inspire lots of emotions, but levity is rarely one of them. And this is point proven all too well by "Act Your Wage…The Pink Slip and Fall of an Automotive CEO," a new review playing Andiamo Novi Theatre through March 14.

Sadly, it's not merely the heavy subject matter that keeps "Act Your Wage" for realizing its full earning potential. The one-hour, single-act review is largely a victim of weak writing (by Raelene Graham, Jamaal Hines and Mike Shreeman) in the form of a bland, formulaic structure and generally tepid humor. This is so much the case that the half-full opening-night audience rarely broke into laughter, and when it did, it was the result of a peripheral joke or gag unrelated to the work's underlying theme.

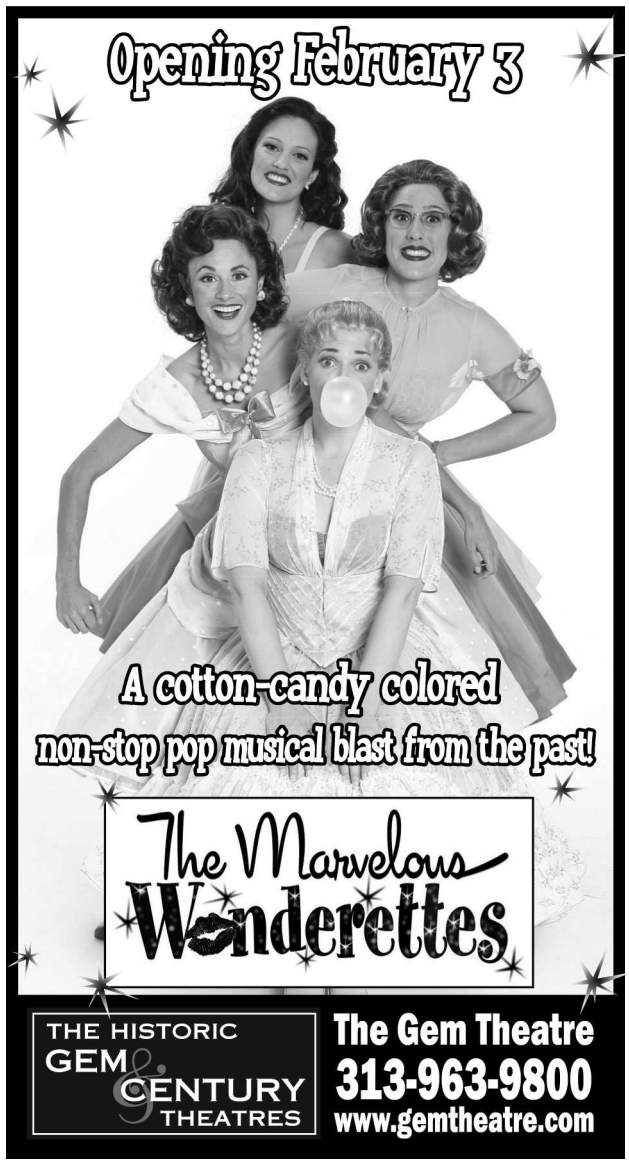
Structurally, the work is a series of short skits chronicling the incomplete evolution of former automotive CEO Philip Ritz from high-flying, big spending executive to cash-poor common man. The skits are loosely strung together, with Ritz's every-man friend Bill as connecting tissue, but ultimately, the production feels oddly disjointed.

Moreover, Ritz's journey from Comerica Park to Costco, a strip club and a seedy Italian restaurant provides little humility or growth for the character - and only a moderate dose of imaginative, if slightly unusual, humor for the audience. Jokes about managing the Detroit Lions as a job even an out-of-touch auto executive couldn't botch feel inherently tired, and worse still, the production fails to deliver anything resembling the "positive message of hope and change" promised in promotional materials. After all, is there really anything inspiring about a failed executive running for political office in a town he freely admits his former company has already ruined?

REVIEW

'Act Your Wage... The Pink Slip and Fall of an Automotive CEO'

Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. Wednesday, Friday-Sunday through March 14. $15-$20. 248-348-4448. www.ticketmaster.com



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► Ford

Continued from p. 15

really imagined I might just run into him somewhere. And I did run into him in his real-life form as Christopher Isherwood.

When I reread the book three-and-a-half years ago, I was relating to what George was going through and to his somewhat suicidal thoughts, because he couldn't figure out why he's living, what's the point to life, what is this all about, why do we struggle every day. I could certainly relate to a man who came to a point where he could not see his future and he questioned the meaning of life.

Did you have the idea of turning it into a film the first time you read it?

Oh no. Not at all. At that time I was an actor and I worked quite a lot in television commercials, but that was about all I did. Most of the time I went to night clubs and did all the things that people when they're 20 years old usually do (laughs). So, no, I wasn't thinking at all about making film. It was really maybe about 12 years ago that I started to really become serious about making a film, and then when I left Gucci almost six years ago, I opened my production company and decided this was the time to do it.

How did being a fashion maven – and having that aesthetic eye – assist in the direction of the film, especially the art direction?

I'm used to framing an image through still photography. But what helped the most was the way I'm used to working, which is with a large group of people, making very quick decisions and creating an environment where everybody feels they can give you – and wants to give you – their absolute best, and then in leading and guiding all of these people in achieving your ultimate vision or point of view. And that is exactly the same in film as it is in fashion.

And my age helped me. A lot of first-time directors are in their 20s and I'm – I hate to say it (laughs) – nearing 50. I've been around. I've got a certain amount of experience, and if someone threw a tantrum, which nobody did, I would've known how to handle it.

One of the morals of this movie is to cherish the little things in life. For you, what are those?

A lot of them are in the film. When I was writing the scene with the hustler in the parking lot, my little smooth fox terrier, which is in the movie, was curled up on my lap. One of the greatest pleasures of my entire life is my dogs, and I've always had dogs going back to when I was a little kid.

I really thought about the things in life that I'm going to miss (when I die), that I'm going to want to take with me. And they're never material things. You're not going to wish that you worked more. You're not going to die thinking about a car you had in 1970-whatever. You're going to think about the connections that you had with other people. The moment in life where you felt truly connected to someone.

A lot of people didn't foresee you taking this path and making a film. What are some of your other hidden talents? Besides making a convincing straight man on the cover of Vanity Fair.

(Laughs) I wasn't trying to be a straight man on the cover of Vanity Fair. If you're a gay man, why can't you sniff the back of a beautiful girl? I'm completely gay, but I have a lot of women friends who, sometimes, I want to touch because they're beautiful and they smell great and I love them.



"I don't think most people knew that I'm extremely romantic, and I'm extremely emotional and insecure and shy. I kind of always pose in the same way. I don't let a lot of people very far into my life. I've always kind of presented a surface veneer, which works for fashion."

– Tom Ford

I don't think most people knew that I'm extremely romantic, and I'm extremely emotional and insecure and shy. I kind of always pose in the same way. I don't let a lot of people very far into my life. I've always kind of presented a surface veneer, which works for fashion.

A lot of people maybe thought that's all there was to me. I have a very good friend that I've had for about 20 years, and he said he's always thought of me as a beautiful lacquered box from the 20s with a platinum handle, but he had no idea there was anything inside the box (laughs).

"A Single Man" opens Jan. 15 at the Main Art Theatre in Royal Oak.

Happenings

For expanded listings, visit www.pridesource.com

OUTINGS

Thursday, Jan. 14

Detroit Area Womyn's Network Gathering, 6 p.m. Join us to dine and socialize. If you are new to the group look for our pineapple people/official greeters. Detroit Area Womyn's Network, 27843 Orchard Lake Rd, Farmington Hills. detroitwomyn@yahoo.com. http://dawn.web.officelive.com

Disabled LGBT Support Group, 6:30 p.m. A support group for disabled LGBT people and their partners. Divine Light Interfaith Ministry, Saginaw. 989-493-6866. www.perceptionssv.org

20Somethings, 7 p.m. A group for LGBT people in their 20s. Meets in room 201/202. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Friday, Jan. 15

Polyamory, 7 p.m. A discussion group for people in non-monogamous relationships. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. "The Outlaugh Festival on Wisecrack." The stars of the Logo series "Wisecrack" hit the road and head to Hollywood for the Outlaugh Comedy Festival, America's first queer comedy festival. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Jan. 16

Hepatits A and B Vaccinations, 11 a.m. Free vaccines offered to the community. ACCESS, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

COLAGE Potluck, 1 p.m. The first potluck of the Detroit chapter of Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere. COLAGE, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Nervous But Excited, 6:30 p.m. A benefit concert to raise funds for the work of Speak Equal. Minimum donation: $10. Speak Equal, 69 S. Division, Grand Rapids. www.speakequal.com

Drag Queen Bingo, 8 p.m. The ever-popular bingo night has gone weekly, with a drag queen host each week. Five15, 515 S. Washington, Royal Oak. 248-515-2551. www.five15.net

Monday, Jan. 18

MLK Day Movie Screening, 12 p.m. A showing of the movie "Unnatural Causes," plus a community discussion on how social circumstances affect our health. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Tuesday, Jan. 19

Growing in Spirituality, 7 p.m. An interfaith group that explores the relationship between faith and LGBT identity. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Sing Out Detroit, 7 p.m. Rehearsals for 35-member LGBT choir. Singing and non-singing members welcome. Sing Out Detroit, 26998 Woodward, Royal Oak. 248-943-2411. linda@singoutdetroit.com. www.singoutdetroit.com

Transgender SOS, 7 p.m. A safe space for spouses, partners, family and friends of transgender people. Ages 18 and up. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

LezBe Honest, 10 p.m. A new lesbian dance night. Studio 4, 314 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 734-302-3687. www.studio4club.com

Wednesday, Jan. 20

New Volunteer Orientation, 6 p.m. A meeting for new or potential volunteers covering history, mission, vision and needs. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Newly Single, 6:30 p.m. A support group for LGBT people who are coping with the loss of a relationship. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Keystone Women's Wednesday, 7 p.m. A friendly, smoke-free environment for women. gProductions, 200 West Michigan Ave, Ypsilanti. 734-544-9960. BGRRRLproductions@gmail.com

Hump Night, 9 p.m. A dance party hosted by Crystal Harding with DJ John Cruz. Cover: $3, $2 with college ID. Sixx Events, 141 9 Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-582-7227. www.club9ferndale.com

Friday, Jan. 22

Performing Arts Collective Auditions, 4 p.m. Auditions for Black History Month performance. Singers, dancers, actors and more welcome. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Dash of Dezsi, 6 p.m. An open house to welcoming Michael Dezsi to Five15. Five15, 515 S. Washington, Royal Oak. 248-515-2551. www.five15.net

Polyamory, 7 p.m. A discussion group for people in non-monogamous relationships. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. "Out of the Past." The true story of a gay straight alliance started in a Salt Lake City high school. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Saturday, Jan. 23

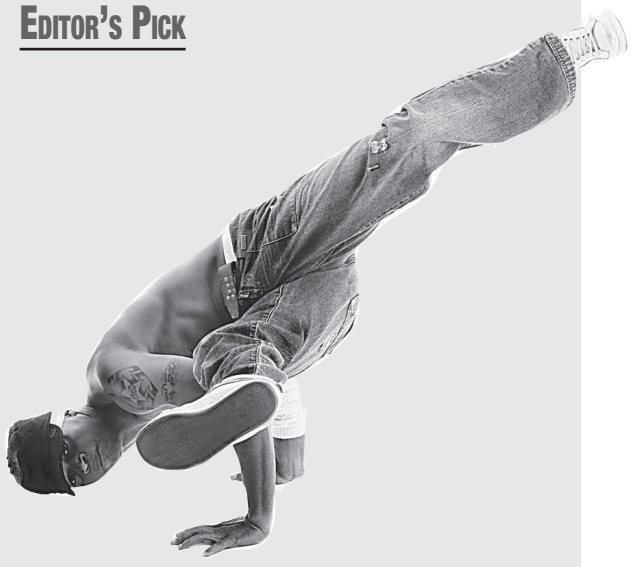
Winter Family Games Night, 5 p.m. An all-ages fundraiser for Together We Can with board games, bingo, pie-throwing and more. Refreshments provided, 50/50 raffle. Suggested donation $5. Together We Can, 2441 Pinecrest, Ferndale. twc@twcdetroit.org. www.twcdetroit.org

Prevent All Mini Ball, 7 p.m. A fun, drug, alcohol and nicotine-free ball for youth. Tickets: $3. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 248-398-7105. www.goaffirmations.org

Drag Queen Bingo, 8 p.m. The ever-popular bingo night has gone weekly, with a drag queen host each week. Five15, 515 S. Washington, Royal Oak. 248-515-2551. www.five15.net

See Music, page 22

Editor's Pick



Are you an LGBTQ teen in metro Detroit with a special talent? Affirmations wants to see what you've got. The Ferndale-based LGBT community center is holding auditions at 4 p.m. Jan. 22 for their upcoming Performing Arts Collective. Teens are welcome to showcase acting, singing, dancing or other performance skills at the center from 4-6 p.m. in preparation for a Black History Month performance featuring Affirmations youth. For more information, call an Affirmations youth staff person at 248-398-7105 or visit www.goaffirmations.org..

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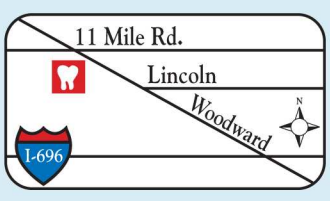
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► Music
Continued from p. 20

MUSIC & MORE

BENEFITS/SOCIAL EVENTS

Michigan Parkinson Foundation "Katie's Kause" A fundraiser for the Michigan Parkinson Foundation with glow bowling, a raffle and food. Tickets: $25. Wonderland Lanes, 8265 Richardson, Commerce Township. 1 p.m. Jan. 23. www.parkinsonsmi.org

The Henry Ford "With Liberty and Justice for All" A day of events honoring MLK, including lectures, discussions and more. Free. The Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. 10 a.m. Jan. 18. 313-982-6001. www.thehenryford.com

CLASSICAL

Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings "Go for Baroque" Performing works from the 17th and 18th century. Tickets: $20 in advance, $25 at the door. Hagopian World of Rugs, 850 S. Old Woodward, Birmingham. 8 p.m. Jan. 15. 248-559-2095. www.detroitchamberwinds.org

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Eroica" A performance of the work by Beethoven. Tickets: $19-70. Orchestra Hall, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 14 - Jan. 17. 313-576-5111. www.detroitsymphony.com

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Hahn and Higdon" A concert with Jennifer Higdon and Hilary Hahn, performing works by Rossini, Shostakovich and original work by Higdon. Tickets: $19-71. Orchestra Hall, 3663 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 21 - Jan. 23. 313-576-5111. www.detroitsymphony.com

Lansing Symphony Orchestra "Command Performance" With violinist Ilya Kaler, performing works by Brahms, Strauss and more. Tickets: $12-45. Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 7 p.m. Jan. 23. 517-487-5001. www.lansingsymphony.org

MSU College of Music "Alumni Violin Festival Concert" Tickets: $10 adults, $8 seniors, free for students. Music Building Auditorium, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 2 p.m. Jan. 17. 517-355-3345. www.music.msu.edu

Pro Musica "Nareh Arghamanyan" A performance by the piano virtuoso. Pre-concert dinner held at the Paradise Cafe. Tickets: $45. Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8:30 p.m. Jan. 15. 313-576-5111. www.promusicadetroit.org

CONCERTS

Detroit Blues Society "Anti-Freeze Blues Festival" A benefit for the Detroit Blues Society with Jeremy Spencer of Fleetwood Mac, Garfield Blues Band and more. Tickets: $25. Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 7 p.m. Jan. 15. 248-544-1991. www.themagicbag.com

Detroit Institute of Arts "FLY" A performance by the jazz trio. Museum admission: $8 adults, $6 seniors, $4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. Jan. 15, 8:30 p.m. Jan. 15. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Phylis Chen and Johannes Moser" A concert on piano and cello. Museum admission: $8 adults, $6 seniors, $4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. Jan. 22, 8:30 p.m. Jan. 22. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Kerrytown Concert House "Ellen Rowe Quartet" A jazz performance with Ellen Rowe, Ingrid Jensen, Andrew Bishop, Kurt Krahnke and Pete Siers. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Jan. 15. 734-769-2999. www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Live Nation "City and Colour" Tickets: $20.93. Fillmore Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7 p.m. Jan. 16. www.livenation.com

Macomb Center for the Performing Arts "Carolina Ulrich" Part of the Young Concert Artists series. Tickets: $10 in advance, $12 at the door. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 4 p.m. Jan. 17. 586-286-2222. www.macombcenter.com

Macomb Center for the Performing Arts "Amy Grant" A performance by the Grammy Award-winning contemporary Christian artist. Tickets: $17-60. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township. 8 p.m. Jan. 22. 586-286-2222. www.macombcenter.com

Magic Bag "The Cribs" With special guests Adam Green and The Dead Trees. Tickets: $15. Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Jan. 14. 248-544-1991. www.themagicbag.com

Magic Bag "Joey McIntyre" A solo performance by Joey of New Kids on the Block. Tickets: $30. Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Jan. 19. 248-544-3030. www.themagicbag.com

Motor City Casino "Dionne Warwick" A solo performance by the Grammy Award-winning songstress. Tickets: $36-40. Sound Board Theater, Motor City Casino, Detroit. 8 p.m. Jan. 15. www.motorcitycasino.com

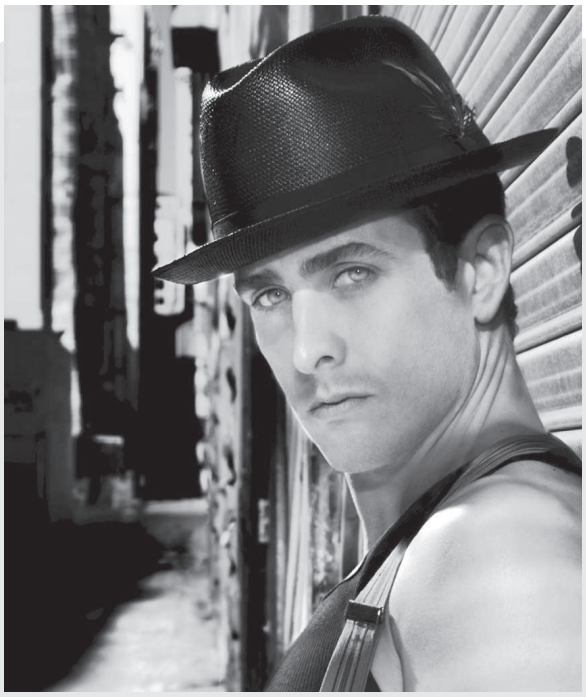
MSU College of Music "Spirituals, Prayer and Protest Concert" A free concert to celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. Part of MSU's 30th annual MLK Commemorative Celebration. Wharton Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing. 3 p.m. Jan. 17, 7 p.m. Jan. 17. 517-355-3345. www.music.msu.edu

Olympia Entertainment "Nick Jonas and the Administration" Tickets: $39.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. Jan. 16. www.ticketmaster.com

The Whiting "Cedric Watson and Bijou Creole" A performance by the Creole and Zydeco fiddler and vocalist. Tickets: $27-30. UM-Flint Theatre, 303 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 7 p.m. Jan. 15. 810-237-7333. www.thewhiting.com

DANCE

Eisenhower Dance Ensemble "NewDANCEfest VIII" A program of new repertory including premiere works by Laurie Eisenhower. Tickets: $16 adults, $12 seniors, $8 students. Troy Performing Arts Center, 4777 Northfield Parkway, Troy. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 23. 248-559-2095. www.ede-dance.org



EDITOR'S PICK

You've seen him as part of the hit boy band New Kids on the Block, and now Joey McIntyre is embarking on a solo tour that's headed to the Magic Bag in Ferndale at 8 p.m. Jan. 19.

McIntyre released his solo EP, "Here We Go Again," in December, a mixture of pop-rock and hip-hop tracks of which the artist says, "I want to get in your face and rock." His solo run of intimate performances will showcase this temporary departure from NKOTB, including the upcoming Ferndale concert.

Tickets for the show, which is standing room only, are $30 and can be purchased at the Magic Bag box office, at the door of the event, or online at www.themagicbag.com.

FILM & VIDEO

Detroit Institute of Arts "Red Cliff" The Japanese action film by director John Woo. Tickets: $7.50 adults, $6.50 students, seniors and DIA members. Detroit Film Theatre, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 15 - Jan. 24. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org/dft

Marquis Theatre "My Fair Lady" Part of the Movies at the Marquis series. Tickets: $3. Marquis Theatre, 135 E. Main, Northville. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 23. www.northville.org

Marquis Theatre "North by Northwest" Part of the Movies at the Marquis series. Tickets: $3. Marquis Theatre, 135 E. Main, Northville. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 16. www.northville.org

OTHER

All Creatures ULC "All Creatures ULC Spiritual Service" Pets are always welcome at our services. We are the perfect place for people who want to include their pets in their spiritual life. Dunk N Dogs Pet Wash, 27911 Five Mile Rd., Livonia. Oct. 18 - March 28. 313-563-0162. www.allcreaturesulc.com

Dawn Farm "Chemical Dependency and the Family" This program will describe the roles and behaviors of family members when living with addiction, how they're affected and options for coping with addiction. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, 5305 Elliot Drive, Ypsilanti. 7:30 p.m. Jan. 19. 734-485-8725. www.dawnfarm.org

Michigan Bariatric Institute "Bariatric Surgery Seminar" A free informational seminar, co-hosted with St. Joseph Mercy Oakland. Franco Communications Center Auditorium, 44405 Woodward Ave., Pontiac. 6 p.m. Jan. 18. www.sjmercyhealth.org

St. Joseph Mercy Oakland "Nutrition Classes" A series of classes hosted by the SJMO Metabolic Nutrition and Weight Management Program, covering such topics as label reading, carbs, sodium and the power of protein. Cost: $75 per session. Franco Communications Center Auditorium, 44405 Woodward Ave., Pontiac. Jan. 4 - March 15. 248-858-2475. www.sjmercyhealth.org

St. Joseph Mercy Oakland "Shapedown" A free weight management program for children and teens ages 6-18. Franco Communications Center Auditorium, 44405 Woodward Ave., Pontiac. 6 p.m. Jan. 14. 248-858-2556. www.stjoesoakland.org

SHOWS

Contemporary Bridal "Winter Bridal Celebrations Show" Includes a fashion show, displays, literature and wedding planners on hand. Tickets: $8 in advance, $10 at the door. Palace of Auburn Hills, 5 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills. 12 p.m. Jan. 17. www.cbride.com

Longway Planetarium "Classic Rock Laser Shows" A laser show with music from Metallica and Ozzfest. Tickets: $8. Longway Planetarium, 1221 E. Kearsley, Flint. 8 p.m. Jan. 16. 810-237-3400. www.sloanlongway.org

Longway Planetarium "Classic Rock Laser Shows" A laser show with music from Pink Floyd. Tickets: $8. Longway Planetarium, 1221 E. Kearsley, Flint. 8 p.m. Jan. 23. 810-237-3400. www.sloanlongway.org

University Musical Society "Fondly Do We Hope...Fervently Do We Pray" A performance by Bill T. Jones and the Arnie Zane Dance Company. Tickets: $18-44. Power Center, 121 Fletcher, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Jan. 22, 8 p.m. Jan. 23. www.ums.org

THEATER

BENEFITS AND FUNDRAISERS

FONTS! A Type of Musical A one-act show written by local authors about the adventures of several computer typefaces that find meaning in their lives. A fundraiser for Spotlight Players, the resident adult theater group at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill. $10. Spotlight Players, The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Rd., Canton. Jan. 22 - 24. 734-394-5300. www.spotlightplayersmi.org

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

Book of Days $10. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Jan. 14 - 24. 517-482-5700. www.riverwalktheatre.com

Mark Twain's Is He Dead? A Michigan premiere. $15. The Players Guild of Dearborn, 21730 Madison, Dearborn. Jan. 15 - 31. 313-561-TKTS. www.playersguildofdearborn.org

Murder Mystery Dinner Theater: Funeral for a Gangster $45 (includes dinner and performance). Spotlight Players, The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill Rd., Canton. Monthly Jan. 16 - March 13. 734-394-5300. www.spotlightplayersmi.org

Nine $20. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre, Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, 911 N. University, Ann Arbor. Jan. 14 - 17. 734-971-2228. www.a2ct.org

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee $17-$22. Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, Parish Theatre, 426 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Jan. 15 - 31. 269-343-1313. www.kazoocivic.com

The 2nd Annual Kalamazoo Improv Festival $10; free midnight show. Crawlspace Theatre Productions, Whole Art's Epic Theatre, 359 S. Kalamazoo Mall, Kalamazoo. Jan. 21 - 23. 269-599-7390. www.crawlspaceeviction.com

The Full Monty Adult themes, language and content, brief nudity. $16-$18. Stagecrafters, Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Jan. 15 - Feb. 7. 248-541-6430. www.stagecrafters.org

The Importance of Being Earnest $15. Village Players of Birmingham, 34660 Woodward Ave., Birmingham. Jan. 22 - 31. 248-644-2075. www.birminghamvillageplayers.com

PROFESSIONAL

A Dozen Things I Want to do on Stage 18+ rated show for content and nudity. $6-$12 suggested donation. The Abreact, 1301 W. Lafayette, #113, Detroit. 8 p.m. Jan. 19. 313-378-5404. www.theabreact.com

A Midsummer Night's Dream Plays in rotating repertory. $25-$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Jan. 29. 313-577-2972. www.wsushows.com

A Song for Coretta $17-$20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Jan. 14 - March 21. 313-868-1347. www.detroitreptheatre.com

Act Your Wage...The Pink Slip and Fall of an Automotive CEO $15-$20. Andiamo Novi Theatre, 42705 Grand River Ave., Novi. Through March 14. 248-348-4448. www.ticketmaster.com

Based on a Totally True Story A Michigan premiere. $10-$20. Who Wants Cake Theatre, The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 16 - Feb. 1. 248-545-5545. www.whowantscaketheatre.com

Boeing-Boeing $30-$39. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Rd., Rochester. Through Jan. 31. 248-377-3300. www.mbtheatre.com

Colin Mochrie and Brad Sherwood $30-$49. Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, 15801 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. 8 p.m. Jan. 15. 313-943-2354. www.dearbornfordcenter.com

Escanaba $20-$38. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Jan. 23. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

Fridays and Saturdays at Go Comedy! $15 for "Showdown"; "Dark Matter" is free. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Happy Season to You, Acquaintance Name By donation. The Abreact Performance Space, 1301 W. Lafayette, #113, Detroit. Through Jan. 16. 313-378-5404. www.theabreact.com

Jersey Boys Tickets begin at $34 (inclusive of parking & facility fees). Broadway in Detroit, Fisher Theatre, 3011 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit. Through Jan. 23. 313-872-1000. www.broadwayindetroit.com

K2 $27-$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Feb. 7. 734-663-0681. www.performancenetwork.org

Monday Nights @ Planet Ant $5. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

January 23
8:00 PM
Hill Auditorium
Tickets: $6-$49
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MOZART
JENNIFER LARSON, Soprano SARAH NISBETT, Alto JOHN CHARLES PIERCE, Tenor

Murderer $14-$16. Broadway Onstage Live Theatre, 21517 Kelly Rd., Eastpointe. Through Feb. 6. 586-771-6333. www.broadwayonstage.com

Rabbit Hole A staged reading. $5. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. 6 p.m. Jan. 17. 810-237-1530. www.flintyouththeatre.org

Snowbound A Late Night show. $10. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff St., Hamtramck. Through Jan. 23. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Sundays at Go Comedy! $5 per show or $10 for the evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Taylor Mason $17-$52. Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44757 Garfield Rd., Clinton Township. Jan. 23. 586-286-2222. www.macombcenter.com

The Last Five Years $25. Magenta Giraffe Theatre Company, The Furniture Factory, 4126 Third St, Detroit. Through Jan. 23. 313-408-7269. www.magentagiraffe.org

The Seagull Plays in rotating repertory. $25-$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Feb. 11. 313-577-2972. www.wsushows.com

The Servant of Two Masters $25-$30. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Jan. 15 - March 27. 313-577-2972. www.wsushows.com

Thursdays at Go Comedy! $10 for the evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! $5 for the evening. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through Jan. 27. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

Imagine That! $10 adult, $7 children. Children's Theatre Network, Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. 1 p.m. Jan. 16. 734-663-0681. www.performancenetwork.org

The Crane Maiden $10 adult, $5 children. PuppetART, 25 E. Grand River, Detroit. Jan. 9 - 30. 313-961-7777. www.puppetart.org

AUDITIONS, CLASSES & NEWS:

FARMINGTON PLAYERS - auditions for "Gypsy," Jan. 24-25, 734-765-4535; MOTOR CITY YOUTH THEATRE - is forming a group of Broadway Bound performers beginning January 16, and is offering summer theater workshops and Shakespeare in the Summer, contact NLFlo@aol.com for details; TIBBITS - auditions for "Doo Wop Wed Widing Hood," Jan. 15-16, 517-278-6029.

HOW TO CONTACT 'THEATER EVENTS' AND 'CURTAIN CALLS' Please send all press releases and promotional materials at least three weeks prior to the scheduled event, and your story ideas, comments, brickbats and accolades - preferably via e-mail - to curtaincalls@pridesource.com or by snail-mail to Curtain Calls, Between The Lines, 11920 Farmington Road, Livonia, Michigan 48150. Unless otherwise noted, ticket prices shown above are for adult general admission tickets only; please contact the theater for questions regarding the availability of discount tickets for preview performances, advance sales, groups, students, seniors and children. Complete listings can be found online at www.pridesource.com/happenings.phtml.>

ART'N' AROUND

Community Arts @ Paramount Gallery "No DouBts" Works by Shereena Osai. Opening reception held 5-8 p.m. Jan. 15. Paramount Gallery, 22635 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 15 - Feb. 15. 248-414-6500.

Detroit Institute of Arts "Avedon Fashion Photographs" An exhibit of 50 years of fashion photographs by Richard Avedon. Tickets: $12 adults, $6 youth, free for members. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 18 - Jan. 17. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Worth a Thousand Words" Prints and drawings related to books, with pieces from "The Brothers Grimm," "Moby Dick" and more. Museum admission: $12 adults, $6 youth, free for members. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 18 - Feb. 20. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Government Support for the Arts" Works Progress Administration prints from the 1930s. Museum admission: $12 adults, $6 youth, free for members. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 18 - March 21. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Drop-in Workshop" Bookarts: The Altered Book. Museum admission: $8 adults, $6 seniors, $4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 8 - Jan. 29. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Drop-in Workshop" Paper dolls. Museum admission: $8 adults, $6 seniors, $4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 2 - Jan. 30. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Drop-in Workshop" Winter Counts. Museum admission: $8 adults, $6 seniors, $4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Jan. 3 - Jan. 31. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Good Mischief with Cemini" A family performance by twin brothers Gemini. Museum admission: $8 adults, $6 seniors, $4 youth. Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 2 p.m. Jan. 17. 313-833-7900. www.dia.org

Detroit Science Center "Accidental Mummies of Guanajuato" The world debut of a new traveling mummy exhibition. Tickets: $24.95 adults, $22.95 seniors and $19.95 children. Detroit Science Center, 5020 John R. Street, Detroit. Oct. 10 - Jan. 31. 313-577-8400. www.detroitsciencecenter.org

Eastern Michigan University Art Department "Electra Stamelos" An exhibition of painted works. Ford Gallery, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti. Jan. 11 - Feb. 26. 734-487-0465. www.emich.edu/fordgallery



EDITOR'S PICK

The weather may be getting colder in Michigan, but Royal Oak is heating up as Stagecrafters presents the slightly naughty musical comedy "The Full Monty." The show runs Jan. 15 through Feb. 7 at the Baldwin Theatre in downtown Royal Oak.

Six unemployed Buffalo, N.Y., steelworkers, desperate for quick cash, present a one-night striptease act at a local club after seeing their wives' enthusiasm for a touring company of Chippendales. As raucous and bawdy as it may be, the show "bares" a serious element as the men work through their fears, self-consciousness and anxieties. Audiences will cheer as they overcome their inner demons and find strength in their camaraderie.

Tickets for performances are $16 and $18. Call 248-541-6430 for tickets. All seats are reserved. Audience advisory: Adult themes, language and content and brief nudity.

Stagecrafters is located at 415 S. Lafayette Ave. in Royal Oak.

Henry Ford Museum "Engines Exposed" An exhibit featuring 50 classic cars, including a 1919 Model T, 1923 Chevrolet and more. Admission: $15 adults, $14 seniors, $11 youth. Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. Jan. 9 - Jan. 30. 313-982-6001. www.thehenryford.com

Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit "Under the Watchful Eye: The Chamsah Project" A free exhibit of chamasahs. Free program, "Kabbalah and You," will be held 4 p.m. Feb. 21 in conjunction with the exhibit. Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple, West Bloomfield. Jan. 10 - March 7. 248-432-5579. www.jccdet.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Woodcuts in Modern China" 1937-2008, Toward a Universal Pictorial Language. An exhibit of 65 Chinese woodblock prints. Free. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Jan. 23 - April 18. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "The Art of Warner Bros. Cartoons" Over 160 drawings, paintings, cels and other art from Warner's classic cartoons. Free. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. Dec. 12 - Feb. 21. 269-349-7775. www.kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Book Discussion" "Chuck Amuck: The Life and Times of an Animated Cartoonist." Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. 2 p.m. Jan. 20. www.kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Library Storytime" "I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly." Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park, Kalamazoo. 11:15 a.m. Jan. 23. www.kiarts.org

Kresge Art Museum "American Modernism" An exhibition of works created in the 1920-1940s. Free. Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Jan. 11 - March 14. 517-353-9834. www.artmuseum.msu.edu

Lawrence Street Gallery "Beat the Blues" A member exhibition with paintings, photography and more. Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 6 - Jan. 30. 248-544-0394. www.lawrencestreetgallery.com

Lowell Area Arts Council "It's A Jungle (Book) Exhibition" Works inspired by "The Jungle Book" by local artists. Lowell Area Arts Council Gallery, 149 S. Hudson, Lowell. Jan. 12 - Feb. 6. 616-897-8545. www.lowellartscouncil.org

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum "Breaking the Mold" Contemporary Chinese and Japanese Ceramic Sculpture. Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw. Oct. 2 - Jan. 28. www.marshallfredericks.org

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum "Textile Extensions" Quilts in a New Context, the work of Carole Harris. Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum, Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw. Oct. 2 - Jan. 28. www.marshallfredericks.org

MSU Museum "Unpacking Collections" The Legacy of Cuesta Benberry, an African-American Quilt Scholar. Showing in the Heritage Gallery. Runs through Sept. 5, 2010. MSU Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. http://museum.msu.edu

MSU Museum "Dear Mr. Mandela, Dear Mrs. Parks" Children's Letters, Global Lessons. Showing in the Main Gallery. MSU Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing. Dec. 20 - April 30. http://museum.msu.edu

Museum of New Art "Christo and Jeanne-Claude" The Prinzhorn Prize Exhibition. Russell Industrial Center, 1600 Clay Ave., Detroit. Dec. 11 - Jan. 16. www.russellbazaar.com

River's Edge Gallery "34 Secrets" An exhibit featuring self-portraits and pieces of artwork by 34 artists. River's Edge Gallery, 3024 Biddle, Wyandotte. 6 p.m. Jan. 15. 734-246-9880.

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Micro/Macro" Views of the Saugatuck and Douglas Shoreline, by John Fleming and Bill Werme. Free. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver , Saugatuck. Jan. 11 - March 1. 269-857-2399. www.sc4a.org

Sloan Museum "Predators" A hands-on exhibit offering insight into the lives of some of the most dangerous animals on land, sea, and in the sky Museum admission: $6 adults, $5 seniors, $4 youth. Sloan Museum, 1221 E. Kearsley, Flint. Jan. 23 - May 2. 810-237-3400. www.sloanlongway.org

The Butcher's Daughter "No Vacancy" A group exhibition with work by over 20 artists from around the country. The Butcher's Daughter Gallery, 22747 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Jan. 9 - Feb. 23. www.thebutchersdaughtergallery.com

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Cory Arcangel" A solo exhibition by the New York-based artist. Free. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. Jan. 16 - April 10. 734-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

University of Michigan Museum of Art "The Image Wrought" Historical Photographic Approaches in the Digital Age. Free. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. Nov. 7 - Jan. 17. 734-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

University of Michigan Museum of Art "The Eye of the Beholder" European drawings and prints from the Pulgram-McSparran Collection. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor. Dec. 19 - March 14. 734-763-UMMA. www.umma.umich.edu

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts "(S)Edition: Prints as Activism" A juried international printmaking competition. Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, 41 Sheldon Blvd., Grand Rapids. Dec. 11 - March 5. www.uica.org

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts "Suspended Presence" An exhibit of drawings and sculptures by Lisa Kellner. Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, 41 Sheldon Blvd., Grand Rapids. Dec. 11 - Jan. 22. www.uica.org

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts "The Economist Series" With works by Mira Burack and Narine Kchikian. Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, 41 Sheldon Blvd., Grand Rapids. Dec. 11 - Jan. 22. www.uica.org

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts "Atrocities" Works by Joel Seah. Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, 41 Sheldon Blvd., Grand Rapids. Dec. 11 - Jan. 22. www.uica.org

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts "Compositions" Ceramic works by Juilane Beth Shibata. Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, 41 Sheldon Blvd., Grand Rapids. Dec. 11 - March 5. www.uica.org

Wayne County Community College "The Creators" Self-portraits by Gigi Boldon, Chin Hui Pak, Sabrina Nelson and more. Opening reception held 5-7 p.m. Dec. 3. Brown and Juanita C. Ford Gallery, 1001 W. Fort Street, Detroit. Dec. 3 - Jan. 30. 313-496-2510. www.wcccd.edu

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Horoscopes By Jack Fertig

Re-imagine the future, Aries!

Venus and the Sun align in Capricorn aspecting Uranus in Pisces and Neptune in Aquarius, bringing opportunities to take responsibility in new forms of relationships and to test artistic innovations. Expect another shuffling step – two forward, one back? – toward marriage equality.

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): Re-imagine the future. Be open to new possibilities. The knock of opportunity may sound like something very different. Trust your instincts and those of your friends to help you decipher the clues.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): Your ambitions may need some clarification in the long run, but for now, focus that vision on your ideals and your more general future. Let your professional goals adapt to those principles.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20): You are a shining sex star. Sublimate that energy to push forward in your career. New ways of projecting authoritative confidence get support and admiration in the boardroom or the bedroom. You might get both if you can keep priorities clear.

CANCER (June 21- July 22): Your relationship needs to be taken seriously, but not "too" seriously. And how important are those disagreements, really? New ideas should be played with, not imposed. Better yet, stop arguing and apply your mouth to better forms of intercourse.

LEO (July 23 – August 22): You can work at being a better lover, but it's not all about technique. That's good, too, but the most important thing is empathy with your partner, and not just in bed! For partnered folks, helping with the housework can count as foreplay.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): Creative efforts at work will probably be misunderstood, but don't let that hold you back. Feedback from colleagues will not only help you to clarify but also to improve your efforts, and open new doors for teamwork. .

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): Lessons learned in early childhood can prove useful at work. The more surprising the relevance, the more helpful that old lesson will prove to be. Contacting an aunt or uncle can prove very amusing, and get you lots of good family gossip.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): Whatever fun you can manage to have with family members can help heal any rifts. Playful approaches to community problems can also prove surprisingly effective. Think ahead, but be bold in creative risks.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): Get your accounts into order and reassess your priorities in life. A new look at traditional values (Your own real traditions, not some political group's cliché!) can help you appreciate things as you never have before.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): The fact that you improve with age is now most apparent – not only in beauty, but in wisdom. Engage freely in banter on topics that you want to learn more about. Your questions can provoke the experts to see new angles.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): Hiding in your ivory tower is usually a good idea in the month leading up to your birthday. Recharge your batteries, and enjoy the company of only your most trusted and beloved friends. Meditate on the important issues to confront in the year ahead.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19): Your popularity now may seem a mixed blessing. Gauge your energies and make sure you really are going to the events you really want to attend. You can rule where you want to be. If you feel put upon, it will show badly.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations in person in San Francisco, or online everywhere. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his Web site at www.starjack.com, and by e-mail at QScopes@qsyndicate.com.

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Solution to puzzle from page 26

A	N	T	S	■	R	O	R	E	M	■	S	C	O	W
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Dear Jody



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I want something she can't guarantee

Q: My girlfriend, "Staci," and I have been going together for over two years and we have lived together for the last six months. Staci moved in with me because she had quit her job as a teacher's assistant (she had her degree but not her certification) and had gone back to school to get her teaching certification. With the economy and cut backs in education, she ended up not being able to get a job – not even her old job as an assistant. As you can imagine, that was quite a blow for her.

Back to the problem: We have been living together for six months. Had things not turned badly for her in the economy, she would not have moved in six month ago. She was desperate and we were involved, so how could I not have her move in? And frankly, I thought it was a good thing. I was ready, actually. Very ready.

The last six months have been very good. We get along well. I've never been with someone with whom I have felt more compatible, and she has said the same about me. I know for a fact that she has also told others that we are very compatible.

On Christmas Day, we were at her folk's house. She has three sisters and a brother and their wives or boyfriends. It was a blast being there as they are very open and accepting of our relationship. (It has always felt so good to be there because of that.) It is always like we are just another couple.

Well, one of her sisters – who recently married – was responding about how getting married changed their lives (they had been living together for 11 years). She was saying how positive the change was. Then, somehow, the conversation turned to Staci and I. They asked when we were going to have a commitment ceremony. That is when Staci said that she wouldn't have a ceremony unless she could absolutely be sure that the relationship would last a lifetime. (She's a child of divorce and doesn't want a break-up to happen again – with or without kids.)

I felt crushed! I had a ring for Staci wrapped and under the tree. It was like an engagement ring. I spent a lot for it so hadn't gotten her anything else. This happened on the day before Christmas. After Staci said that, I excused myself and went to the mall. I got her some clothes and had them wrapped there. When everyone went to bed, I took the presents out to the car and replaced them for the ring. Luckily, Staci didn't see my present; my changing it didn't cause any problems.

For her, that is. I, on the other hand, have felt horrible since. I don't know what to do next. I don't want to ask her for a commitment ceremony, given how she feels about not being able to make a life commitment. And I don't really want to stay with a person who doesn't want that, though I love her, and it would be painful to break-up with her.

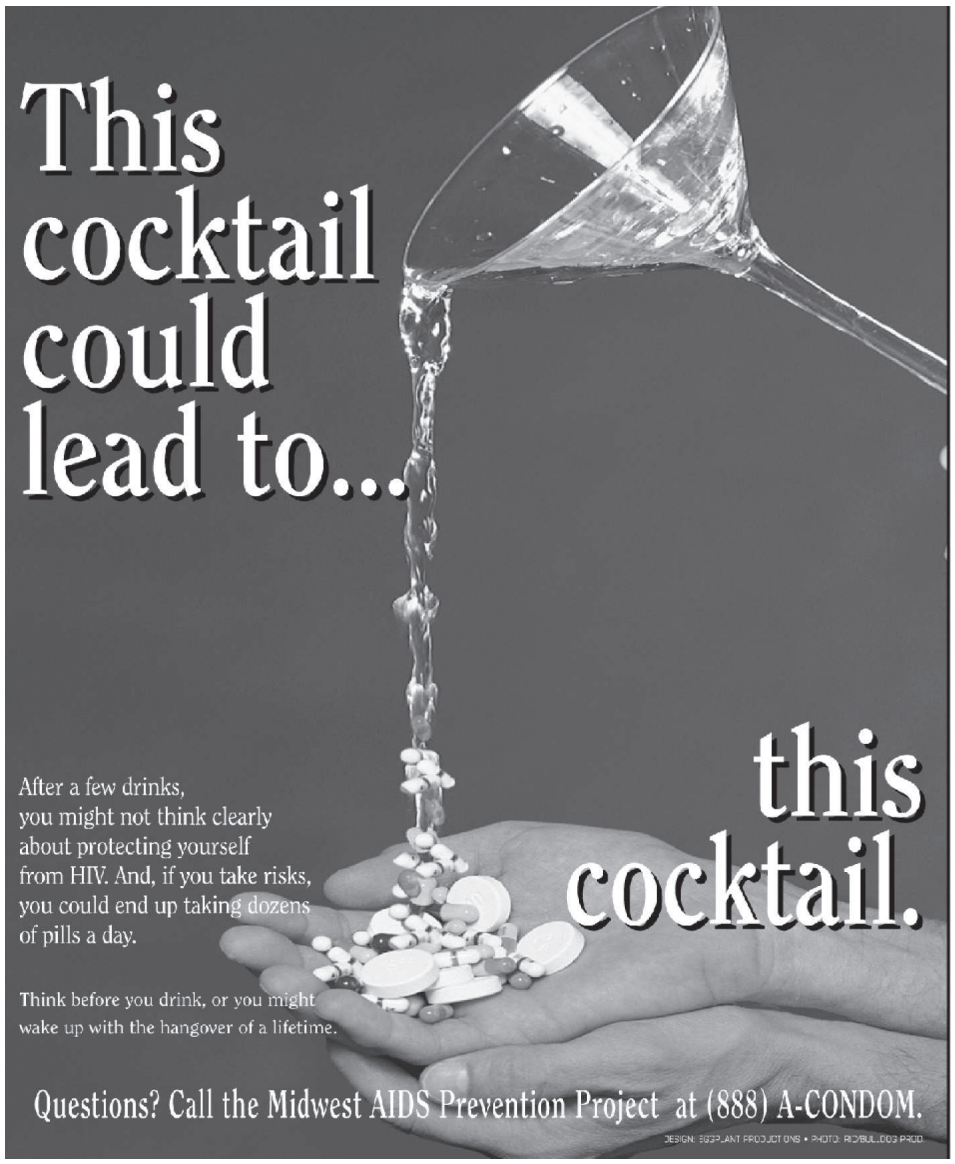
I just don't know what to do next. She's made her position clear. How can anyone guarantee a lifetime commitment?

Commitment Ring in My Pocket

A: You are correct. You can't "guarantee" a successful relationship. You can only hope and commit to working on having a good one. No relationship comes with a guarantee or warranty. As far as Staci having made "her position clear," I think it is more like she's made her fears clear. So address her fears, not what you think you heard her say. Have a conversation with her about relationships having no guarantees – not a conversation about a commitment ceremony.

Given that, it's important that the two people involved in that relationship be committed to making it work, without this commitment – from both individuals – a relationship can't grow and change and be satisfying for both people. This would also be the time to talk to her about how successful relationships are when they're created by people who are committed to communicating well and who work on keeping the relationship honest, supportive, relevant and fresh. (And what that would look like for each of you.) This conversation – or series of conversations – will be valuable for the both of you. You'll get more information about what's going on with her and her needs, feelings and fears. And this will hopefully open a line of communication enabling the two of you to honestly decide if you want to pursue a more committed relationship.

Jody Valley spent 12 years as a clinical social worker. She worked with the LGBT community both as a counselor and a workshop leader in the areas of coming out, self-esteem and relationship issues. Reach Jody at DearJodyValley@hotmail.com. The "Dear Jody" column appears weekly.







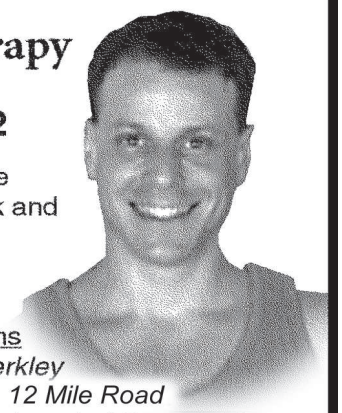
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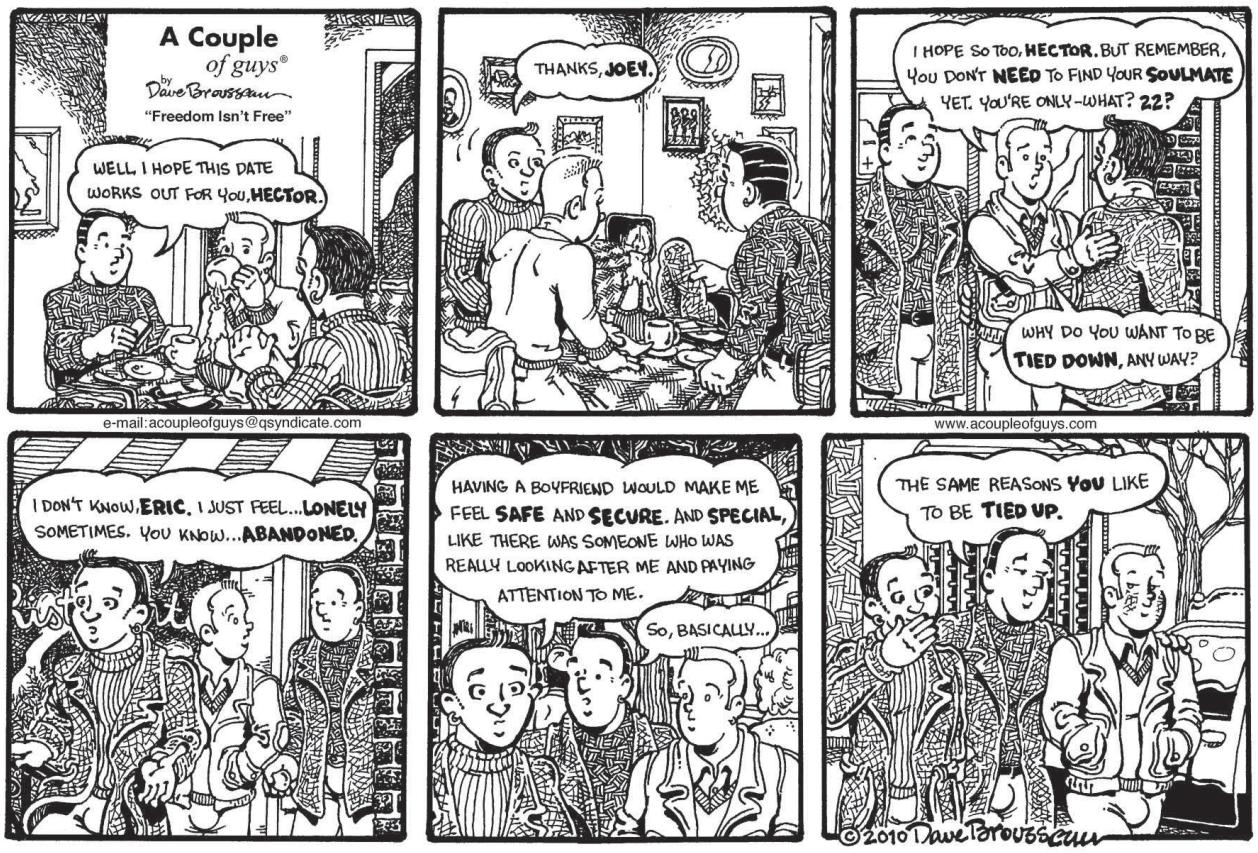
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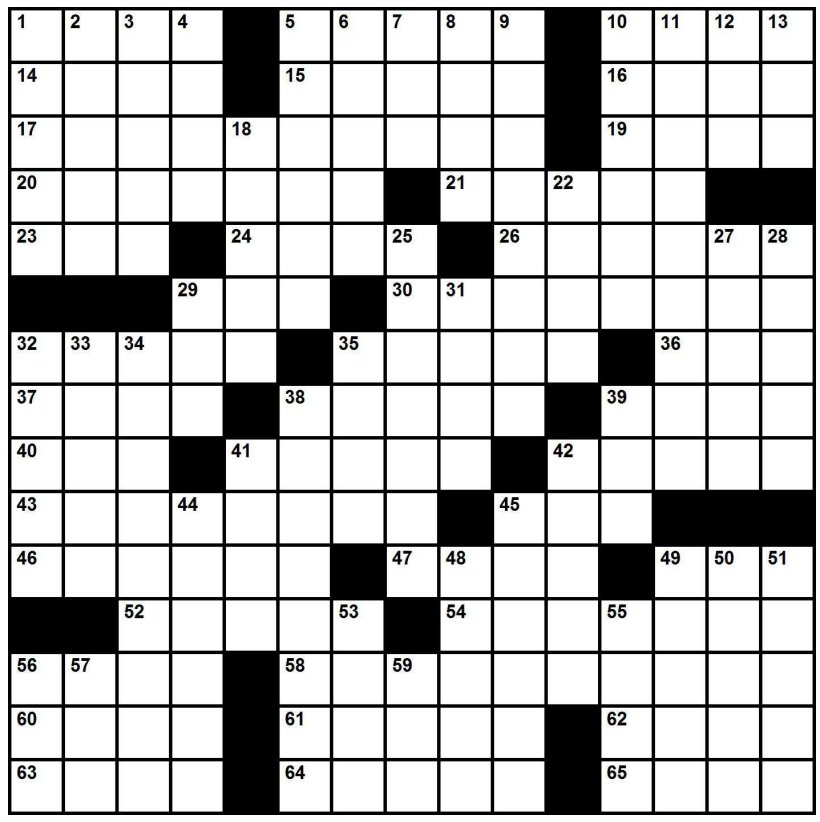
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Q Puzzle

From Page to Screen



Across

1 You can have them in your pants
5 Composer Ned
10 Refuse hauler
14 Strip a fruit
15 Madonna title role
16 "What fun!"
17 Novel of 34-Down or movie directed by 25-Down
19 They move your dinghy
20 Von Trapp's rank in the navy
21 House that Shakespeare worked under
23 Above-ground trains
24 Silence for Bernstein
26 Bridal paths
29 "___ De-Lovely"
30 Rodgers and Hammerstein title song
32 Pop artist Haring
35 Notice a cologne queen
36 Corinthian consonant
37 Bringing up the rear
38 Sentimental sort
39 Working hard
40 Language suffix
41 Earhart, for one
42 Fred's first partner
43 Hazel, for example
45 '60s radical org.
46 Bodywork place
47 Style of many South Beach buildings
49 Summer D.C. setting
52 Incorrect
54 Comic Lea
56 Where a cobbler puts the tongue
58 Portrayer of George Falconer in 17-Across
60 Owl sound
61 How Homo sapiens stands
62 Old photo print
63 Means justifiers, at times
64 Leases out
65 Fruit flavor for gin

Down

1 Lickety-split
2 Like a pair of orifices
3 Vacation excursions
4 Put out
5 Depends (on)
6 Hot spots
7 Type of job
8 State in French
9 How to compensate for your lover's absence?
10 Nike logo
11 Julianne's role in 17-Across
12 Finish'd
13 Craven of "Cursed"
18 "Friends in Low Places" singer Brooks
22 Rotary phone feature
25 Fashion designer who just debuted as a film director
27 Response to an online personal
28 Stir-fry
29 Electronics co.
31 "Etta ___" (old comic strip)
32 Kind of light for Joel Schumacher
33 Cinch course
34 Novelist Christopher
35 Opera highlight
38 Rod accessory for a hit man
39 They may be personal
41 Type of stick held between the legs
42 Brewmaster Coors
44 Insertion marks
45 Bloodhounds pick them up
48 Monarch's mandate
49 Swashbuckling Flynn
50 "Same here"
51 California border lake
53 Literary contemporary of Truman
55 Goes on TV
56 Brown's "Murder, ___ Meowed"
57 Sweetie pie
59 Deighton of spy thrillers

Solution to puzzle on page 24



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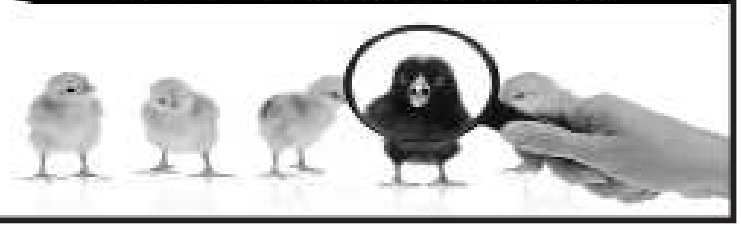
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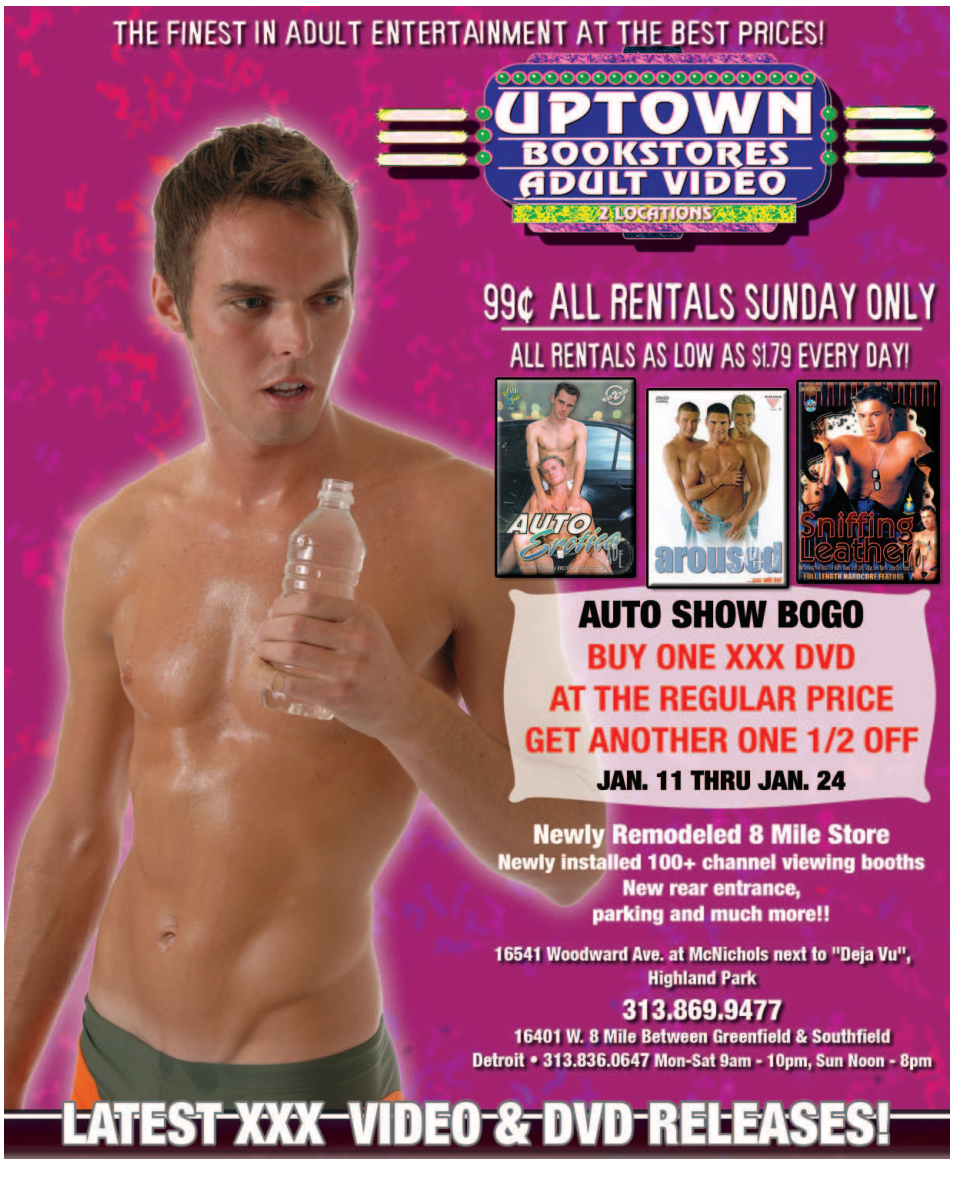
1. Mike, Don and Tom 2.. Frankie, Rito and Jeff
3. Joe, Jack, Chuck and Ed 4. Rich, Anesthesia, Jorge and Drew
BTL photos: Danielle





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Flamingo, Pontiac,
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Gigi's, Detroit,
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Gold Coast, Detroit,
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North Star, Flint,
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by Anthony Paull

The Princess and the Pee-Pee



Screw me once, shame on you. Screw me twice, shame on me. Screw me three times, we're dating! Yes, isn't it a wonder how fast we slip into relationships? Sure, we take our sweet-ass time in so many other aspects of our convoluted lives – forever pondering the purchase of a phone, car, or house. But when it comes to acquiring a partner, a life commitment, why do we so fall so fast for a beautiful face when we know the ugly truth: relationships are never perfect, and eventually, loved ones are destined to reveal a flaw, imaginary or not.

"But everything looked perfect on paper!" Drew drunkenly slurs, guzzling his third beer of the evening. Home from college for the holidays, he has his fancy, black Prada scarf coiling his neck like an anaconda – a gift from his rich, sugar-daddy boyfriend. "Well, perfect until I saw his pee-pee. For the love of God, it's so gross!"

Yes, meet Drew. He's um, well, special. Yes, since he was a wee, little bitch, he's earnestly portrayed the princess role, disturbed by even the slightest bit of an imperfection in each of his string of boyfriends. The problem is he finds the most trivial things to pick apart. For example, take his last boyfriend. Drew ended their relationship because of the poor chap's table manners. "He brought his face to his spoon instead of his spoon to his face," Drew attests. "You should see how he eats soup, with his nose to the bowl. How could I live with that?"

"But you can't keep sabotaging your relationships over stupid shit," I argue, as we depart from the pub, in route to the mall for some holiday shopping.

Fanning his face with his scarf, Drew silences me with a slap on the arm as we greet mid-day traffic. Gridlocked in between snowbirds and a semi-truck, he tells me, with a slight whimper, that his boyfriend's penis looks like a bonsai tree. "You don't understand. It's like, all crooked, and the hair is bushy, like in clumps. And veins everywhere. Really hard veins. Like his shaft is made of bark."

"How awful," I callously reply, with an eye-roll. "How ever will you make it work?"

"Not funny," he cries. Feverishly fanning his face, his baby-powder scented perfume filters throughout the car. "You need to help me. What should I do?"

"Turn out the lights and squeal when you feel it."

"That's not helping," he says, far from amused. Meanwhile, text upon text, his iPhone is lighting up with "I love you" from his boyfriend. "It's serious. We're not even having sex anymore. Well, at least, not naked."

Afraid to inquire about what that means, I remain quiet as Drew comes up with a bright idea as we head into the mall, surrounded by a sea of frantic holiday shoppers. "I got it!" he announces. "What do gays do best when presented with a problem?" Bored, I stall with a reply. "Decorate it!" he answers. "You know, make it pretty. That's how we raise the market value of neighborhoods. We buy a horrid house, hollow it, honor it with enhancements and reap the rewards."

"I'm not following," I admit.

"Well, maybe I can…I don't know…manicure it," he says, heading into Bath and Body Works, where he finds a bottle of mint exfoliating cleanser, moments after purchasing a grooming kit at JC Penney. Texting his boyfriend to check on his cats back home, he informs me, "I'll just, you know, prune his pubes with scissors and soften his pee-pee veins with this cream."

"WHAT?! Who wants a soft dick?"

"Well…," he begins.

"You're being stupid. This is fucking stupid!" I state, losing patience.

"Stupid enough to be in your column?" he bites.

"Ugh! Don't you get it?" I respond. "Everything in life can't be perfect. Life IS ugly!"

There, frozen in place, he torches me with his baby-blue eyes, deflated by a hit of reality. So to ease the pain, I remind him of beautiful things – like the gifted scarf around his neck and the "I love you" texts from a doting boyfriend who cares for his cats. And in my boggled mind I wonder if this is where the conveniences of modern time have led us. Are we so cushioned by our pretty houses – the labels on our clothes and our designer Starbucks coffee mugs – that we can't be bothered by the shadow of something less than ideal? So your boyfriend has an "ugly" dick. So what? Enlighten me; when will we evolve to the point where we realize that we're human, and not every trivial thing needs to be fixed? Lately, it seems we've begun taking cues from the media, inventing problems during life's lulls or exacerbating small ones, leading us to a world where ugliness primarily comes from within.

"Fine! You're right. You win. So what should I do? Should I still buy this?" Drew asks, clutching the exfoliating cream to his heart.

"Nah, you better save your money."

"For what?" he replies, flustered.

And for once, I don't sugarcoat the ugly truth, because I know it won't help. "Therapy."

When will we evolve to the point where we realize that we're human, and not every trivial thing needs to be fixed? Lately, it seems we've begun taking cues from the media, inventing problems during life's lulls or exacerbating small ones, leading us to a world where ugliness primarily comes from within.

Anthony Paull is a freelance writer from Sarasota, Fla. The Dating Diet runs the second week of each month. To comment on this article, send an e-mail to chris@pridesource.com.







Top Five LGBT Entertainment Stories of 2009

Adam Lambert's Make-Out-Gate

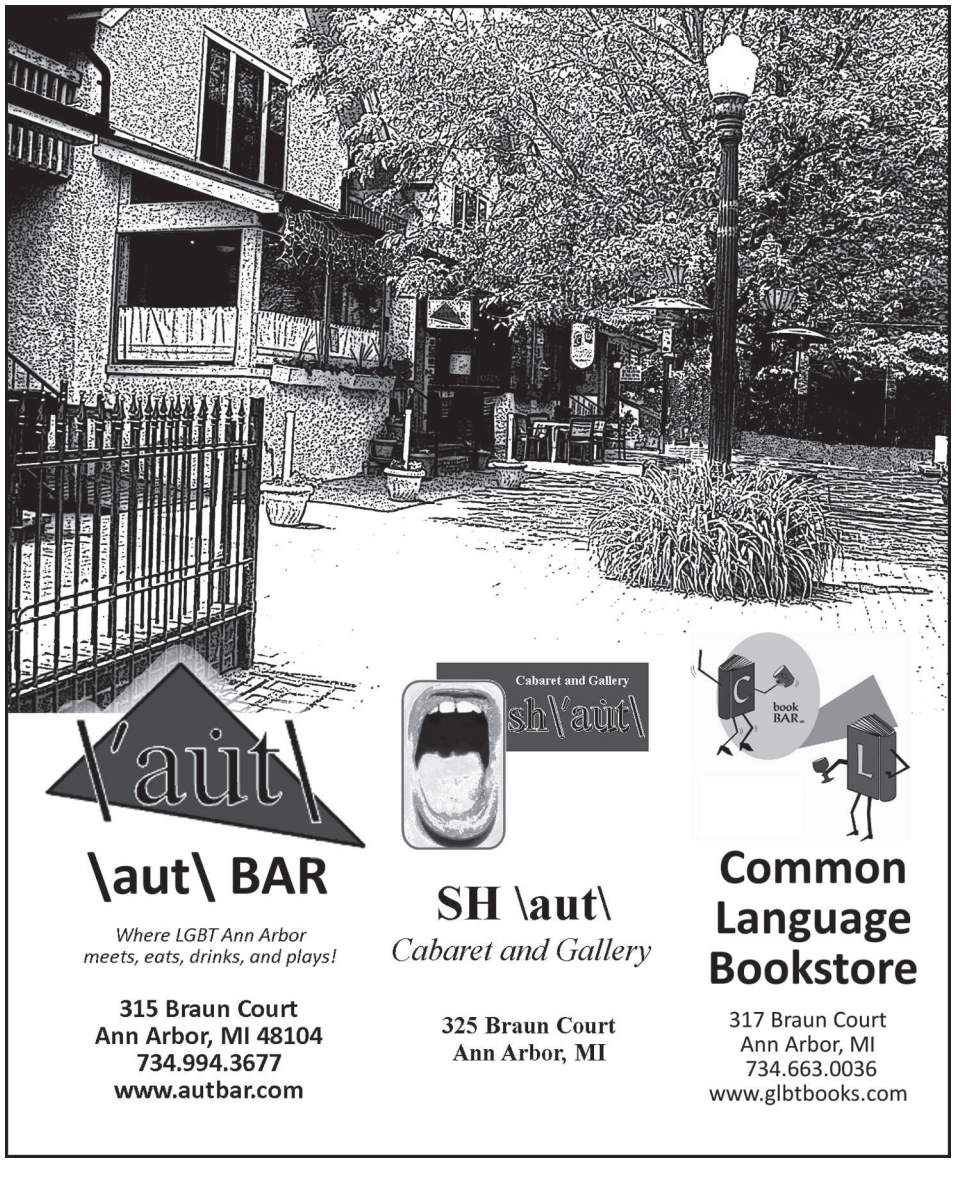
When a conservative stalwart like Peggy Noonan (former speechwriter for Ronald Reagan and George Bush) declares a pop star part of the decline of American civilization, then you know that pop star is doing something right. And that's what recently happened with "American Idol" runner-up Adam Lambert. The most successful of all gay former "Idols," Lambert kicked up a storm with little to no effort by simply coming out, overseeing crazily gay cover art for his debut CD and then fake-shocking everyone at ABC with his American Music Awards performance in which he did nothing that a thousand other pop stars haven't already done. Except he did it all with other guys. Someone had to go there first, so it's more than a little brave of Lambert to cannonball it like he has. And anyway, maybe Noonan was just talking about that song he sang for "2012."



Adam Lambert's kiss

'Glee' sings out loud

"New Moon" made sex objects out of its male stars like it invented the idea of lusting after beautiful young men. "Precious" presented lesbian teachers as warm, caring surrogate moms to a child in desperate need. "A Single Man" explored the silence and secrecy surrounding gay spousal grief in the early 1960s with deep sensitivity and deeper style. But for sheer gayness and unadulterated joyful pleasure, nothing touched "Glee." Arguably the biggest TV phenomenon of the most recent fall season, the all-singing, all-dancing show took the "High School Musical" template and turned it on its head, adding sass, sarcasm and swagger to the formerly uncool scenario of showtunes-obsessed teens in show choirs. All it took was an evergreen Journey song and one boy brave enough to perform "Single Ladies" in a leotard. Take that, jocks.



Meredith Baxter speaks out

The culture at large is obsessed with youth. Everyone knows this. But one of the problems with that is the perpetual myth that to be gay is to be always 22 years old. So when one of America's beloved TV moms came out, it felt like a touch of revolution. Witness Meredith Baxter, Alex P. Keaton's "Family Ties" mother, warm maternal presence in countless TV shows and TV movies, actual mother to her own kids off screen, and an actor who'd already been living openly as a lesbian before ever opening her mouth about it. But when she decided to say the words late in 2009, she re-entered the public consciousness in a way that spoke volumes about the dignity inherent in gracefully allowing life to lead you to a new kind of love, no matter what form it takes and no matter the stage of life. Next step: her memoir, due in bookstores sometime in 2010, a capitalist move of which Alex would approve.



Baxter

Carrie Prejean tries to sour gays on beauty pageants

All she had to do was fib just a little. It's worked for countless church-leaning disco divas over the years. A simple "I love my gay fans" is sufficient to sidestep thorny, career-endangering political or religious beliefs. But Miss USA contestant Carrie Prejean, goaded into a response by judge Perez Hilton, quickly became not only a poster child for the religious right, but a too-easily-mocked figure of English usage sticklers ("Opposite marriage?" Huh?) and logic-loving citizens nationwide. Worse, for a second there, she threatened the symbiotic nature of beauty queens and gay male pageant viewers. Who would spoil the fun like that? And then keep on spoiling it with more and more scolding and uptight talk show appearances? And then create a whole new delightful category of schadenfreude with multiple sex tapes? No one but Carrie P., the gift that kept on giving. Here's to more wackiness in 2010.

Lady Gaga takes over everything

Back in the day, cult performers like Grace Jones, drag-monster Leigh Bowery and actor/singer Divine ruled dance clubs with a weird sort of majesty. They were imperious, mysterious and sometimes just plain raunchy. But after Madonna, the goal became superstardom, not eccentricity. Enter Lady Gaga, a pop star who absorbed those influences and created a marketable – wildly marketable in fact – synthesis of mainstream hit song-sense and extreme personal style for a new generation. From outfits made of Muppets to greeting Queen Elizabeth II in crazy red makeup to shrouding herself entirely and freaking out Eminem at the VMAs before accepting an award on behalf of "God and the gays," Lady Gaga took the wide open space that was 2009 and inserted herself into its interesting-female-pop-star-shaped void. She was everywhere, almost maddeningly ubiquitous. And while her latest million-selling single is called "Bad Romance," the gay love affair with this nervy diva is just beginning.



Lady Gaga

Romeo San Vicente can be reached care of this publication or at DeepInsideHollywood@qsyndicate.com.

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